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THE
SECRET CORRESPONDENCE
OF
ADAME DE MAINTENON,
WITH THE
PRINCESS DES URSINS;
FROM THE
ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS
IN THE POSSESSION OF
THE DUKE DE CHOISEUL.
TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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The Princess des Ursins

Portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller, 1700-1705

Portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller, 1700-1705





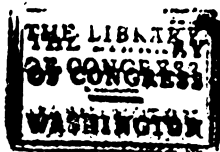
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THE

SECRET CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MADAME DE MAINTENON.



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LETTERS

or

MADAME DE MAINTENON.



LETTER CCL.

TO THE PRINCESS DES URSINS.

Versailles, December 4th, 1713.

NEITHER Fribourg, the castles, or war, are any longer mentioned; Marshal de Villars is in the citadel of Bastadt with Prince Eugene, fighting only with civilities; our general arrived there with the prescribed number of troops who marched in to the sound of drums and trumpets; they meet very frequently, both in private and public, and I am told they play piquet in the evening; it is even asserted that the Prince lost fifty thousand crowns at this game when Marshal de Villars was at Vienna.

LETTER CCLI.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, December 16th, 1713.

It is not likely that we should be unfavourable to the interests of the court of Spain: there is but too much reason to be devoted to it, so long as it continues worthy of confidence; but it is difficult for a good understanding to be kept up at such a distance, and when there are so many intermeddlers; we must in this, as in everything else, do the best we can, and leave the rest to fate. The Duke d'Ossuna is not in great repute: I know not whether it is your fault or ours; M. d'Aubigny, who is said to be returning to Spain, will afford you much information on various subjects.

You would be very unjust, if you thought you had reason to complain of Marshal de Villeroi; and I am bound to tell you, that in every thing which has occurred, he has shown all the esteem, friendship, and courage necessary to serve and uphold his friends, the distance in this respect is as unpleasant as in others; were it otherwise, we should see our way clear at once, whereas volumes are written without our understanding each other.

Our officers arrive daily, but Marshal de Vil-

lars does not come! You may easily conceive, that I am in continual alarm lest peace should not take place, and our military men break off sooner than other negotiations would do. It is said that the Grand Duchess is out of danger; but I doubt it, from the care she takes to seclude herself, for she has forbidden enquiries after her health to be made at her house.

LETTER CCLII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, January 1st, 1714.

I HAVE to answer your two letters of the 10th and 17th ultimo; the first is full of the state of the Queen's health. M. Fagon agrees with Madame de Compoing on this subject, being convinced, that as long as she has milk she will be weak. I saw an instance of it for four months in the Dauphiness of Bavaria; she was always in full dress, went every where, and had linnen applied to her breast, which required changing several times a day—but I am much more uneasy on account of her glandular complaint, and I cannot conceive why a moment is lost in doing all that is possible for them; wherever it might be necessary to go, all who feel an interest in her health should consider her absence as trifling, if *her life can be preserved*. How I pity you in

your difficult situation! for I know perfectly well the attachment of a heart which no sovereignty can solace, for what is calculated to excite its sympathy: it appears to me that you experience more difficulties than ever; I am not surprised that the Archduke does not like you, for you are too much attached to those whom he regards as his enemies: we expect a courier every moment from M. de Villars, who will, doubtless, inform us as to what we may hope about peace.

It is said the Elector is not satisfied with being replaced in the same state in which he was during the war. It is impossible that Marshal de Villeroi can be wrong with regard to you; he is so truly attached to you, that it is not singular he should exhort you, however needlessly, from the fear he has of your being on a bad footing with the King; I have witnessed so much affection and anxiety on his part, in all that concerns your interests, that you would be ungrateful if you abandoned him. You are right in being more flattered by the hatred of the Archduke, than all that he could say or do in your behalf. If you are fond of pride, you will agree wonderfully well with Marshal de Villars, and so much the more, as it is backed by merit, though he has his defects like other men. I have heard it said that the Queen of Sicily is heartily tired of royalty, and that she wishes herself once more at Turin. Grandeur is accompanied with great

troubles, and, whatever you may say, nothing is preferable to death.

The pregnancy of the Duchess de Berri is confirmed; I do not think that her court will ever be very full, as long as she indulges the taste of secluding herself with a small number of young ladies, while the rest of the court can scarcely have a sight of her. She is very fat, and slovenly in her dress, an example that is followed but too generally. You would no longer recognise the taste of the French: the men are worse than the women; it is they who suffer their fortunes to be ruined, who wish their wives to take snuff, drink, play, and pay no attention to dress; habits which are now practised by the most prudent; when their friends speak of it to them, they answer that it is necessary to live in peace.

LETTER CCLIII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, January 8th, 1714.

I do not know whether it is because we reflect but little in early life, but it seems to me that so many extraordinary events did not occur formerly; your inundation is one, and causes much greater evils than delaying the couriers. La Touraine, which you know to be the finest part

of France, is ruined by similar visitations. The Queen is greatly to be pitied she suffers so many ills; and that of her teeth appears to be the most violent: the tooth-ache has left me for the last fortnight or three weeks, by a remedy which I shall propose to you, if the good which it does me is lasting. I think the King of Spain must be much offended by the indecency of the churches; he has not been accustomed to such things in his infancy; the service is performed and heard here, as in a convent. I am very much edified with your chapel: every thing that you do is well done. We expect a courier hourly from M. de Villars, who will perhaps announce peace, if we may be allowed to judge by the state of the negociation a week ago, but it is so easy for unforeseen incidents to interpose, that we must not flatter ourselves with anything positive.

LETTER CCLIV.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, January 15th, 1714.

I LOOK upon you now as one of the most unhappy beings in the world, from your anxiety respecting the Queen's health; I do not think there can be any pain like that of losing those to whom we are attached, and I know your sentiments for this Princess; everybody partakes of

them, and I see no change in the admiration in which she is held: you will do me a great pleasure in informing me exactly of the state of her health. I felt much satisfaction in conversing with Clement, and we are all delighted with the portrait of the Prince of Asturias. I think it correct, because it is not faultless; but he has a fine physiognomy, and an air of grandeur very suitable to his station. I should imagine he is very much like the portraits that we have seen of the Queen.

Peace is not made, but it is not broken off; we are anxiously expecting a courier from M. de Villars.

LETTER CCLV.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, January 29th, 1714.

WHAT can I say to you in the state in which we are, and that in which you are? I am not disposed to flatter myself: misfortune is now the lot of our Princes, if it is a misfortune to quit this world. The Queen has not an illness which youth might be expected to relieve; it is as you say, a complication of evils with which she is enfeebled. I cannot express how much we are afflicted here, and the esteem in which she is held: the state of the King is dreadful to imagine, and many people pity yours.

Whatever may happen, collect all your fortitude, and let me know every thing that passes in your mind on so sad and great an event. No one can inform us of what ought to be done, and of what you fancy as to the future, be then yourself; do not omit what events regard you personally, for I feel a lively interest on this subject.

You may easily conceive that I shall not trouble you about news: all sensible people think of what is passing at Madrid, whilst others mask themselves, and dance day and night.

LETTER CCLVI.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, February 4th, 1714.

It is not astonishing that Madrid and all Spain are in tears; but it is surprising that so many people here should be afflicted as they are, for a Princess they have never seen. They are continually sending to enquire news of persons likely to know anything of the event, and one of my women told me this morning, that in returning from mass, a servant had run to her in the chapel to tell her, quite transported with joy: "it is said that our Queen of Spain is better." The letters just received have drawn tears from all

those who have seen them ; I do not think there can be a more afflicting sight than that which you have witnessed. M. Fagon approves of woman's milk : but I dread this great repugnance of the Queen for a nourishment so repulsive in itself. The Duke de Richelieu saved his life by this remedy : he sucked two tall well made women, forty-five years ago, and he was almost that age himself ; he is still living. If any thing gives me hope it is what you tell me of the diminution of the glands, which I always consider as the Queen's greatest affliction. M. Fagon thinks, as you do, that if her strength returns, she should have warm baths, which may act internally and externally. What ought not to be done, to save such a life ? And does not the King prefer a separation of three, and even of six months, to one for ever ? The idea of such a misfortune should cause everything else to be looked upon as secondary. I have not courage to speak to you of anything else, and if I had there is nothing very agreeable to tell you : peace disappears, war approaches, the affairs of the church grow worse, those of Spain proceed badly in every quarter ; the misery here is great ; the Queen of England is worse than ever, and the King, her son, is wasting away with lassitude. I do not think Marshal de Villeroi expects an answer from you, circumstanced as you are. God grant that you may be soon able to return one !

LETTER CCLVII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, February 11th, 1714.

I HAVE waited so long for the letters from Spain, that the King is come into my room to pass the evening, and I cannot have the honour of writing to you.

How can you leave us in our present anxiety respecting the Queen's health? The best news you announced in your last letters was not enough to make us tranquil. The Queen of England, dying as she is, asks me news of her; she has received all her sacraments; to-day we hear that she is better, but I do not believe she will recover; it seems that she would be very sorry to do so.

Peace is still uncertain. I do not think you have a great inclination to hear of the balls at the Duke de Berri's, nor of the five or six thousand bottles of wine which are drank there, for it is an open house to everybody. Must another week elapse without receiving news of the Queen? Really, Madam, those who are a little reasonable, cannot fail to be unhappy under such circumstances.

MADAME DE MAINTENON.

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LETTER CCLVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, February 19th, 1714.

I HAVE no letters from you this post, and this, joined to what is circulated to-day of the extremity to which the Queen is reduced, makes me fear everything. It is said that you have no hopes; the best people of this country are the most afflicted. I have not fortitude to say anything more; it is useless to dwell on such a subject. I am in constant dread of the arrival of a courier: the state of the King of Spain causes great alarm, and I can conceive yours from the interest I take in it.

LETTER CCLIX.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, February 26th, 1714.

WHAT can be said, Madam, upon such a sorrowful subject? I think the best way is to say nothing about it. After submission to the will of God, and the exertion of your fortitude, ther

is nothing better in afflictions than a change of objects, and you are forced to this by every consideration.

The occupation of soothing the King, assisting him in his affairs, and preserving the precious remains of the Queen, are about to give you many cares, and perhaps much anxiety. People are very much occupied here with what is passing in Spain; they are agitated, and wish to know everything that occurs: but many are alarmed for the King's grief, and fancy him almost as ill as the Queen was.

LETTER CCLX.

TO THE DUCHESS D'ALBA.

Versailles, February 25th, 1714.

MADAM, on any other occasion, I should have been delighted to receive proofs of the continuance of that kindness with which you have always honoured me, and of which I hope I know all the value: but it is true that the loss we have just sustained adds to and renews that which we experienced two years ago. To speak as mortals, these two sisters have had a sad destiny, and appeared on earth only to make themselves regretted.

To speak as christians, God has been pleased to place them in security, out of the dangers of the grandeur and celebrity which they enjoyed in this world: we cannot doubt of their happiness. It is your King who is to be pitied: one cannot think of his situation without alarm; and I assure you that I offer up many prayers for him through that small congregation which pleased you so much.

I have communicated your respects to our King, who received them in a manner which would have satisfied you had you been present, and ordered me twice to thank you for them. I often think of you, and make inquiries of the Princess des Ursins about you; but the state of the Queen did not permit her to answer me on the subject; and she has written to me about nothing for some time, except her illness, and the fears she entertained. I believe she is dreadfully afflicted; and, if I dare to venture, I would ask you now about her. How much are those to be pitied who are capable of friendship! You have experienced it more than any one, and really it is difficult to conceive how any one can bear such afflictions. I cannot conclude with you in thinking that I have the honour of conferring with you in person, which I never shall have; but I shall remain to the last moment of my life with the esteem you merit and the respect which I owe you, Madam.

LETTER CCLXI.

TO THE PRINCESS DES URSINS.

Versailles, March 5th, 1714.

I HAVE always found the court, which I never liked, very good for afflictions, for there you are forced to forget yourself to think of others. This is your present situation, which will leave you but little leisure for indulging in grief; you must solace and amuse the King, which is not always very easy; you must attend to three Princes, and, what is much worse, to all who surround them. You will be obliged to meddle in every thing, and have five or six parts to fill; this would overwhelm a less enlarged mind than yours, and a disposition less amiable: nothing can be more glorious than your whole life, which goes on increasing in honours, while it improves in point of good qualities.

It is true that you have just experienced a dreadful affliction, and that you can never forget what you have lost; but every day mitigates the impression, especially when one is much occupied. I do not comprehend, and it will not be comprehended here, why the King does not surmount the repugnance of returning to his palace! Does not everything equally retrace to him the loss which

he has suffered? It is already reported that you wish to keep him in the country, in order that he may see nobody.

I do not think there can be anything better for us than that you should be near the person of this Prince; you will always be French, and favourable to the union of the two crowns: if the King thought otherwise you would be informed of it by persons of more consequence than myself, for everything here passes through the ministers.

According to all appearances, we are going to have peace; and, as I am not destined for joy, I only feel it in my ordinary manner, the affairs of Cardinal de Noailles embittering all my existence, which will not be long enough to see an end of them. Your friend writes to you a line, and will be glad to be remembered by you; he is always the same with regard to you, and whether he praises or blames you, he is actuated by the same principle.

LETTER CCLXII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, March 12th, 1714.

WE received the treaty of peace yesterday evening by M. de Contades, regularly and formally.

signed, and with which the King is satisfied, a circumstance that adds much to the public joy. Mine would be great if you had peace with Holland, and I no longer heard it said that it is your interest alone that prevents it. It is affirmed that in that case, you would take Barcelona more easily, and that the King of Spain would find himself in repose in his own kingdom, and his revolted subjects forced to submit. M. de Mornay will soon depart for his embassy in Portugal: I know not what services you can render him, but I recommend him very sincerely to you. He is the son of M. and Madame de Montchœveuil, who were two of my best friends, and of probity rarely found in this country; he possesses the same principles of honour, talent, experience in business, and a very conciliating disposition. It is useless to give you his history, but his merit has been detrimental to his fortune, by rendering those jealous who might otherwise have protected him.

We shall soon see Marshal de Villars arrive triumphant; and, indeed, he must be pardoned some little vanity, since it is so flattering for him to have terminated the war gloriously, and made peace.

The King went, some days ago, to see the Queen of England, and found her in tolerably good health; my own no longer allows me to pay my respects to this Princess as often as I could wish; I am frequently indisposed, and I have now a cold which has succeeded a fever of six days.

But Madam, notwithstanding the great part you perform, and it is greater now than ever, I think you must be very sorrowful, for it will be difficult for you to forget the loss you have experienced. I often meditate upon the appearance of those two Princesses, who merely lived long enough to make themselves regretted; I should greatly pity the Queen of Sicily if she had known them, such as they were.

Our church affairs damp the joy arising from peace: it is not possible to be here without some pain.

LETTER CCLXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, March, 19th, 1714.

THE death of your amiable Queen deranges all the ideas that one might otherwise form. I can easily conceive that the King of Spain will marry again; he is too young and too pious to remain as he is; but two women are not to be found in the course of one life; and children by two marriages often give rise to great disorder. His Majesty's piety is so firm and enlightened, that he will place his sole reliance upon providence; for, in truth, we know not what is best for us, and we have only to act always as rationally as we can,

referring the issue to the Almighty. We were hurt because peace was not concluded at Gertruydenburg and Utrecht, and we see that God intended a more advantageous and glorious one for us, which it is thought will contribute to the submission of the Catalonians.

Marshal de Berwick is about to pay his formal respects to his Catholic Majesty. He is a man who merits all your confidence, full of honour, probity, piety, frankness, and good sense ; and though he is not so brilliant as our Frenchmen, he is as worthy of your esteem. Why are you not reconciled with the Marquis de Brancas, who is a very honest man ? I ask you, perhaps, imprudent questions ? I am very free with you, because all that passes between you and me goes no further, except that Marshal de Villeroi has, on certain occasions, seen some of your letters, which in other respects are kept with great secrecy.

You have sometimes laughed at our political courtiers ; they are now giving the rein to their imagination upon the Princesses which the King might marry, and their profundity is not exhausted by future contingencies.

LETTER CCLXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, March 26th, 1714.

I HAVE received two of your letters, one apparently by a courier, which I am ignorant of, and the other by the post. The first is filled with praises of the King of Spain; and I assure you, that you ought not to be displeas'd with the idea we all have of him in this country. The other letter is full of your wishes for a good understanding between our two Kings and nations. I do not think that the King ever questions the friendship of his Catholic Majesty, and I am well assured that he will always entertain a real one for his grandson; but they are too distant from each other for a perfectly good understanding, and there are too many intermeddlers between them, some of whom are interested, ill-intentioned, or incapable; thus your plans are scarcely practicable, and only shew the goodness of your heart, and real attachment for the two Kings. Your letter is sad, indeed more so than the former ones; I can easily account for this, and when sorrow is as great and as reasonable as yours, reflections are as afflicting as in the first moments

of grief. It requires great courage to resume one's former occupations after such a loss: why do you wish us to have known her? We are sufficiently afflicted on account of her mere reputation.

LETTER CCLXV.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, April 9th, 1714.

I DOUBT not but you feel gratified at the news of peace, but there are seasons when we are incapable of joyful emotions. Reason requires us to rejoice at seeing the people breathe again; which they can only do here as yet through hope, for times are very hard, every thing having risen one half, without exaggeration.

You are in the right to be glad of having Marshal de Berwick, as a more honest man I have seldom known. But permit me to tell you, that you are not always well informed, and therefore have not known the worth of M. de Brancas; I speak to you the more boldly of this individual, as I am not interested for him, for I know he is recalled; I like to render homage to worth, and I can assure you, that he is a stranger to intrigue, has no connexion, and is unknown at court, of great piety, and without any other object than

to make his way by fair means. I think with you that the loss of the Queen may greatly affect the King's health, as he is naturally very serious, and requires amusement. God grant he may find consolation in a second marriage, for I see no one who does not calculate on that, regarding it a matter of course.

LETTER CCLXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, April 16th, 1714.

I AM no longer so well satisfied with your letters, as it seems to me that you change your opinions, and you are little satisfied with us. We are told wonders of Cardinal del Giudice, so that I am delighted with his journey here, the cause of which no person can divine; but as for myself, I shall always think it useful to see a worthy man. I do not comprehend why, having so few of them, you have sent away M. de Brancas, and refused M. de Berwick; you will have some difficulty in finding their equals. As to other matters, of which I hear people speak only very superficially, I hope that the King and this cardinal will come to an understanding upon many points more easily than by letters. I am just come from St. Germain, where I found the Queen up, but still

very languid; nothing can equal her virtue and misfortunes; I fear, lest you lose the Prince who causes you so much anxiety; tooting carries off many children.

LETTER CCLXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, April 23rd, 1714.

I THINK that no one can expect to see another Queen of Spain like the one we have lost; but the King is very young not to marry again. It is easy to see that you are not satisfied with the peace of Rastadt; it is not so here, and little account is made of the Archduke preserving the title of King of Spain, as the King of England assumes that of King of France, which is affixed to treaties without any embarrassing difficulty. If you take Barcelona, the Catalonians must submit. If I have given you an ill-timed portrait of Marshal de Berwick, I have given you a true one: it is astonishing you have so much esteem for him, and yet refuse him. I am well persuaded you wish for a good understanding between our two Kings; they would soon be agreed if they could have an interview; but, as that is impossible, there must always be a third party, which will spoil everything. M. d'Aubigny will not

have much to tell you of the conversations that we have had together, for they were very short; but he will perhaps show you, that the King really wished you to have a sovereignty. In answer to your questions respecting our courtiers, I will tell you that you are much beloved in France; and the King of Spain is thought a very devout and good man, but often ill-informed respecting this country. You are hurt at a cabal, which is not what you think; but as it is impossible to explain myself fully upon this subject, I had better drop it altogether. I am too much attached to you not to tell you that it is difficult to justify you with regard to what is now passing in Spain: M. de Bergheitz estranged, M. de Brancas disgraced, M. de Berwick rejected, M. Orry at the head of everything, few Spaniards in the council, many principal offices absent, the King very much secluded; it is all this, Madam, which now occupies the attention of our court with very different sentiments: Marshal de Villeroi and myself hear it with grief. You are really admirable in not saying a word of Cardinal del Giudice; it does not appear to me that you know he has left Madrid, nor why he has come here. My respect for his Catholic Majesty has made me surmount the repugnance I have to seeing foreigners, knowing that he had a letter for me; I have seen him for a moment, and understood little that he said, because he spoke very low, and I am deaf:

he is so well thought of, that I hope he will be an angel of peace; it would be very singular if this does not take place between our two Kings, who certainly love each other, and are both very just.

Letters are a feeble resource when we have so many things to talk over, as we should have; though we could not do now without a dispute, for you appear to me much prejudiced against us; and though we are, perhaps, in some respects to blame, we are far from being so much so as you imagine. I must then confine myself to assuring you, that I shall always interest myself in what concerns you, and that the great part you have to perform does not prevent me from often pitying you.

LETTER CCLXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, April 29th, 1714.

I do not know what to say to you, for the only subject here is Spanish affairs, and I must not say a word of them to you, for you would not believe me, nor even Marshal de Villeroy, than whom I know nobody more sincerely attached to you. You allow me to ask questions, on condition of answering them when it pleases you; you are ill-informed, and you think that I am still

more so than yourself. I am certainly ignorant of many little intrigues, but I am no stranger to things of consequence; you are dissatisfied with us, you distrust us, and are prejudiced against us; you are right in certain things, but wrong in others; how is it possible to unravel by letters affairs so intricate, not writing to each other, at one time through prudence, at another through mistrust? You do not say a syllable to me of Cardinal del Giudice: I do not see foreigners; old age and its complaints weigh me down; all would, however, have yielded to my respect and zeal for the Catholic King, if it had been in my power. Has one the courage, in such a situation, to fill a letter with deaths, marriages, the pleasures of Marly, the hunts with the Elector of Bavaria, who is very much pleased with the ladies of the court? Being, therefore, unable to unbosom myself to you, I confine myself to assuring you, that I shall always be very sincerely attached to you, and that I would sacrifice myself to procure the repose of your King of Spain, who cannot, in that case, suspect me of any interested views; I shall see nothing of what is to happen, but I feel great respect and a real affection for him.

LETTER CCLXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, May 2d, 1714.

You do not then believe me when I tell you that I meddle with no business, and that there would be as much repugnance in communicating anything to me, as I should have in hearing it. I have always been the same in this respect, and was certainly much hurt at the hotel d'Abret, when a courtier came to have a tête-à-tête with me, and I heard you laughing with the Mademoiselles d'Albret, de Pons, and de Martel. You cannot say more in praise of the King of Spain than all who return from that country say of him; they say he is a very excellent man, full of justice, kindness, and humility; that he is a saint; that he understands perfectly well general affairs and his own private concerns; that he is timid, particular, rather wavering, and not sufficiently confident in himself: this is the real portrait which is given us of him, and which bears so much resemblance to what we have seen, that we can scarcely doubt of its correctness; in other respects, all worthy people entertain the same affection towards him that Frenchmen have for the blood of their sovereign. I know better than any one

that your intention has always been to unite the two Kings and the two nations; I have ever thought the first object very possible, and even that it would be difficult for them not to love each other always; I have not thought the same respecting the other, believing it not easy to unite two nations, naturally opposed to each other, and both proudly tenacious of their customs.

You are right in saying that I should be crest-fallen if I knew that M. de Brancas had said that he would make you quit Spain, and that the King would have you carried away by five hundred horsemen. I venture to say that it is not credible you could have believed such an insensate conversation, and which cannot have been held by a man who so well knows that the King will not send five hundred cavalry to Madrid to take you. I think the King has never doubted but that the King, his grandson, would send you away immediately if you required it, nor that you would quit Spain if he commanded you as your King; he has not been surprised at the fresh assurances which you give me in your last letter, and I think you are very far from believing him capable of such violent proceedings against a person who merits so much consideration in every respect. M. de Brancas asserts that all his crime consists in having declared to the Spaniards that it was not the King who had sent Orry to govern, that he is not looked upon in this coun-

try as capable of such a task. I speak to you so much the more freely of M. de Brancas, as it is without any object or interest that he is recalled, and that there is an end to the affair.

I have never comprehended that you are thinking of retiring; and when I wish to find the reasons you might have for it, I suspected that you contemplated the Queen's death, which was the only circumstance that could indispose you to the part you fill. I have always known your disinterestedness, and if one might presume to say it of a person of your birth, your poverty—I do not believe you without glory, but I think you without wealth, or at least it is very disproportioned to your station; this is one of the simplicities of which I am accused. It is impossible but you must have experienced much chagrin in your present situation, and that many things are imputed to you of which you are perhaps innocent; but once more, Madam, how can it be avoided, having to do with so many different characters? We think Spain indifferently governed, that there is often a change of measures, that the feelings of the Spaniards are not sufficiently consulted, and that you ought not to have put Orry into the high station he occupies: you have nearly the same thoughts respecting us; but all that could be said on this subject would be endless and useless. You know now that the peace of Spain with Holland is the chief impedi-

ment. You have done perfectly well to send a man of consequence, who will speak directly to the King. The importance of the siege of Barcelona is perfectly well understood here, but still better that of peace with the Dutch. I have no particular troubles to announce to you, but sufficient experience to know, that many accompany great stations, and that you cannot avoid them, in the present state of things, upon which there is such a diversity of opinions. Our astonishment is great when you write to us that you cannot comprehend what delays the journey of M. de Berwick, and we affirm that it is you who have rejected him. His only view in wishing to go to Spain, was to be present at the siege of Barcelona.

LETTER CCLXX.**TO THE SAME.****Marly, May 5th, 1714.**

I HAVE already written to inform you that they make no account here of the Emperor assuming the title of King of Spain, as the King signs treaties with the King of England, who assumes that of King of France; it is strange that, in such matters, you should think so differently from us, being well informed as to what takes place upon

every subject. I told you also that you were blamed for not wishing Marshal de Berwick to come to Madrid, as he only intended to stop a short time, and solely to make arrangements with M. Orry for the siege of Barcelona, wishing to secure this object before commencing so important an enterprise. You know the death of the Duke de Berri, which has thrown us into great consternation: thus to see all our Princes taken off, to have to weep over those who are dead, and to tremble for the living; your letter prepares me for the loss of the Infant Philip.

I think the Catholic King must be much affected at the death of the Duke de Berri: they were all three very much united, and could not, in the course of nature, expect a separation so soon. I conjure you, Madam, to mention me to his Majesty on this sad occasion, and to inform him that our Prince died with great piety and fortitude. We have seen our dear Dauphin here to-day in good health; that of the King continues the same, although he is extremely affected by the loss of the Duke, and he witnessed the progress of the disease and his death, with the greatest attention; it was he himself who ordered the sacraments to be brought to him, and saw them administered while the Prince was still perfectly sensible. To-day he has gone to see Madame de Berri at Versailles; there can be no doubt of her being much afflicted, and it is greatly to be feared she will injure her health.

LETTER CCLXXI.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, May 14th, 1714.

I OUGHT not to complain of your sincerity, and I now answer you in the same spirit; but you reason upon a sandy foundation: you think that we were able to continue the war, and to force the Emperor and empire to sue for peace; and I assure you that M. Desmaretz, Minister of Finances, did not wish for it more ardently than Marshal de Villars, who would have had all the honour of the war; but he was not in a condition to pass the mountains; he was obliged to confine himself to the defensive, which produced no favourable result. You will not believe me, and yet I tell you the truth. You know now what retards the siege of Barcelona; the King desires nothing more than to see the Catalonians reduced; but he has engaged that the King his grandson, should sign the peace with Holland. This is the point in question at present, and I hope that his Catholic Majesty will remove the obstacle. I have already informed you that Marshal de Berwick wanted to confer with you about what was necessary for this siege, not wishing to undertake it at the risk of being deficient in everything:

what harm would he have done you in being a fortnight at Madrid? I do not see Cardinal del Giudice, nor do I know what he does or says respecting the Marquis de Brancas, of whom I will speak to you no more, because you seem to attach no very great importance to what I have already said to you on the subject.

It would certainly be acting a noble part to contribute to the union of our two Kings: I do not think that, personally, they will ever cease to love each other; but it is impossible, from their not being able to have direct explanations, that there should not often be incidents to unravel, which, for the most part, depend upon third parties.

The Queen of England is better, and thinks of going to Chaillot in a few days. Madame de Vandermont writes to me that the King of England is sickly, and on the point of visiting Plombieres.

LETTER CCLXXII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, May 28th, 1714.

I HAVE to answer your long letter of the 12th. You are ironical upon my attachment for his Catholic Majesty, and for the Princes, his children, which I have very sensibly felt; but I freely

pardon you, well knowing that your high station exposes you to great troubles. So long as the Princes continue children, they will only cause us anxiety on account of their health, in other respects every thing we know of them is satisfactory. I shall never call the reports of our enemies, nor what they circulate amongst their people, triumphs. The Catalonians would be soon humbled if you would sign the peace with Holland, and this is the only way of punishing their rebellion and insolence.

The Archduke well knows that the peace we have made with him is not dishonourable. All the flattery which falls to the lot of kings could not prevent that of Gertruydenberg being thought very humiliating for France, but the present is not looked upon in the same light.

Why do you seem not to understand me, when I reproach you with not wishing to have Marshal de Berwick with you for a fortnight at Madrid? This refusal has caused it to be said, that you do not wish one to speak candidly to you, which is, however, always the best way.

As to M. de Bergheitz, we know very well that he wished to leave Spain ; but we also know that he has too high a sense of honour, and too great an affection for his King, to quit him, if he thought he possessed his confidence, and could by that means be useful to his master.

Cardinal del Giudice is much esteemed at our

court ; he appears to be very intelligent, but he is reserved ; he loses no opportunity, however, of approaching the King's person ; he has permission to come to Marly, and we shall know when it pleases him, why he came here. We have another mute in M. de Chalais, who is at Paris, without wishing to say any thing as to the object of his visit. The Baron de Capres, who arrived from Flanders, is also silent : you will make them speak whenever you please, but the French cannot conceal their astonishment.

I have easily perceived the change of your sentiment, but you excite my pity so much, notwithstanding all the pomp by which you are surrounded, that I should pardon you something still more offensive than a little ill humour. It is true that the King's health remains unchanged, as your ministers will inform you, and that our Dauphin is very pretty and healthy ; but the latter is not the case with your friend Marshal de Villeroi, who is cruelly tormented with the gout, from the feet to the head. They have sent to tell me, that he sets out to-day for Villeroi, not being in a state to come to Marly ; he is going home for a little repose, but I do not think the courtiers think it far enough from the King. The Princess did me the honour of paying me a visit yesterday : she has a real affection for you, but she could wish the peace with Holland were signed, and not to hear it said by everybody, that your sole

interest stands in the way of it. The Duke de Richlieu is recovering from an apoplexy at the age of eighty-seven. I entreat you to pardon the freedom of my letters, as it is caused by my attachment to you.

LETTER CCLXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, June 2d, 1714.

It is very afflicting, and not less surprising, to have lost our Princes: all the dissipation of the court cannot supply the void which it occasions. It was the will of God, and there is no more to be said on the subject. The pregnancy of Madame de Berri has gone on so well till now, that we may hope for a boy. Our Dauphin is very well, and the King's health becomes more surprising daily. I am delighted with what his Catholic Majesty has just done, and I hope, without knowing anything positive as yet, that he will soon be master of Barcelona.

Nothing would be more useful than to indemnify you for what you have lost; for, however great may be your station, I should easily conceive that you long for retirement, which there is little probability of the King of Spain consenting to, as he would lose too much by it as well as

your amiable Princess. All that Cardinal del Giudice says of the Prince of Asturias is quite surprising; I conversed with the King about him the other day during the whole promenade. The Duchess de Lorges died the day before yesterday, to the great grief of M. de Chamillard's family, which was on a very friendly footing with her.

LETTER CCLXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, June 9th, 1714.

I HAVE not yet received the letter which I expect from you by the post; I now answer that which the Prince de Chalais has brought, and which he sent to me by Madame de Caylus, to whom he paid a visit. I should willingly have received him had it been in my power; but I must carefully avoid seeing those who are engaged in public affairs, as much to prevent injuring them as myself: I am more liable than any one else to commit imprudencies by my natural frankness; and, if politics consist in dissimulation, I am certainly not a proper person for them. I must therefore adhere to you, who permit everything that I take the liberty of telling you, because you

know perfectly well my motives. Why have you so long retarded your consent to the peace with Holland? Barcelona would be yours, and there would be no dissatisfaction in any quarter. At length, Marshal de Berwick sets off in a week, and I hope, with the help of God, he will reduce the rebels. It has appeared to me, that he thinks of making a tour to Madrid merely as a courtier, he will tell you nothing but what you like to hear. You must be allowed praise on account of your disinterestedness; and you have been always so pure in this respect, that it has excited surprise when you wanted something for yourself. As to myself, I conceived that, contemplating the Queen's death, you wished for a place of retirement; and, as you are not accustomed to think meanly, you wanted a sovereignty, which, it is said, you would have had, if you had not been so obstinate with regard to obtaining the guarantee of the Dutch.

We are so far from you, that it is impossible to concert measures promptly; and if you add to it, on your part, slowness and uncertainty, affairs will not proceed very briskly. It is true that the mission of M. de Chalais appeared very extraordinary: he comes to say nothing, owning, however, that he is sent; but it is useless to repeat what has been already said. It appears to me you have no doubt of my seeing the Prince de Chalais: it is true that he should not have been

considered as a foreigner, and even the Spanish should not be regarded by us in that light.

You will not understand that they do not wish any person whatever to meddle with public affairs here, except the ministers; that my inclination accommodates itself perfectly with this regulation, and that I am so weak and sickly as to be unable to attend to anything. Madame de Caylus is as dissatisfied as yourself, and wished that the Prince de Chalais had been excepted; she had a visit from him with which she felt highly honoured and much pleased, from the assurances he gave her of the continuation of your friendship. You will be very well satisfied with us as to all that concerns her; and I agree with you, that she is one of the most sensible women we have here: she has rather changed her opinions—a subject which gave me a little umbrage; but, in other respects, her society is so agreeable, that, without considering our relationship, I cannot help taking notice of her. She will take the liberty of recommending her brother-in-law to you, for whom M. de Chalais assures her you are favourably disposed, and, with you, this is always followed by effects. She sends her second son to Barcelona, where he is likely to remain sometime with his uncle.

I do not doubt but the King thinks as he ought of your disregard of your own interests, but you should have no doubt of his desiring, more than any one, that you should have a sovereignty, and

therefore it is probable he will do all in his power to obtain it. However highly I may think of your station, I conceive that you would wish a retreat to be secured to you, after which you will live in greater tranquillity where you are.

LETTER CCLXXV.

TO THE SAME.

Rambouillet, June 16th, 1714.

THERE has been great joy at what the King of Spain has done for the peace of Holland, for here we think it as necessary as you think it disgraceful. The greatest penetration consists in knowing the intentions of others; but I did not think it extended to letters, and yet I see that you have discovered some coolness in mine towards you. It is true that great difference of opinion naturally arises when one is so far off, and unable to give explanations. I saw no reason for preventing the peace, and I could not bear the idea of having no justification for you. I know that the sacrifice which has been required of you is great; but the interest of a peace of which the King was a guarantee, is also a very serious concern. It is this great distance that separates us, which often tempts me not to have so frequent a correspond-

ence with you, however honourable it may be to me but it appears to me very pitiful to trouble you with trifles which you hear from all quarters, and for which you care but little, and not dare to treat upon important subjects, which one has at heart, and upon which we might very easily inform each other. However this is an evil without remedy: M. de Villeroi does not excuse me these temptations, and would, perhaps, find fault with my confiding them to you, but I wish to conceal nothing from you.

It is true that Marshal de Berwick wished to pass through Madrid, to know all the preparations that had been made for the siege he is to undertake. It was not upon the opening of the trench that he wished to consult you, though I think nothing is above the reach of your knowledge.

I have always well understood the difference that ought to be made here between the ministers from Spain and those from foreign courts; you taught it me, when you obliged me to see the Duke of Alba, and you know my friendship and the intimacy I had with his lady. Thus circumstanced, I should have seen Cardinal del Giudice with all my heart, had I been my own mistress. I have already several times explained myself upon this subject. The esteem with which you wish me to believe the Catholic King honours me, affects me beyond any thing which I could say to you, being more attached to this Prince than I can express.

LETTER CCLXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, July 1st, 1714.

I ASSURE you that the King is very sorry whenever he does anything which displeases the King, his grandson; but he thought the peace with Holland absolutely necessary, having pledged his word to the Dutch. It is a great misfortune that the two courts, whose union we wish, differ so often in opinion: you are persuaded that we should not have made peace, and we that France could no longer carry on the war: how is it possible to agree upon such opposite positions? But at length peace is made in all quarters; I hope Barcelona will be soon reduced, and that the King of Spain will be tranquil. Will you not hear reason upon my seeing nobody, and can you think I regard the ministers of his Catholic Majesty like those of other Princes? But, once more, women are not permitted to meddle with politics here, and I am not sorry for it; for, besides not liking them, I should certainly commit imprudencies, without reckoning those which would be imputed to me. In other matters, I beseech you to believe and persuade his Catholic Majesty that I concentrate in his person all the affection I had

for those we have lost. Conceive, after this, whether I should not have felt great pleasure in seeing the Prince de Chalais, and in talking with him upon a subject which might afford some consolation to the King. If it concerned what is within my knowledge, you should certainly be well informed of it, for I fervently wish for his happiness; but I can say nothing, and am reduced to praying that he may find in a second wife what he merits, which it is not easy to obtain twice in one's life. People are not displeas'd with him who is silent till he is permitted to speak, but it is thought singular that he came to maintain silence. The Chancellor retires; his successor is not yet named.

If I could explain myself to you, my letter would be longer, and it would convince you that our disputes do not diminish the esteem and confidence with which I shall ever remain attached to you.

LETTER CCLXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, July 16th, 1714.

You judge very justly of Marshal de Villeroy's stay at Lyons, where he is adored, and he manages everything so mildly, that I think he might have

some of the rebels hanged without displeasing any body; but I am sorry that his presence is necessary there for some time, because I will not write to him, though I have much to say. It is true that the Archbishopric of Lyons is almost hereditary in this family, as well as all the higher charges of the Province, which is not too good in policy, for all the Villerois will not, perhaps, be like those we know. As to the Abbé de Villeroi, I do not know enough of him to meddle with his establishment: places in the church interest the conscience of those who bestow them, and one has sins enow of one's own, without being answerable for those of others: however, I know nothing which should exclude him, but the King's inclination is wholly in favour of the Marshal. It is true that I do not like to meddle with affairs, that I am naturally timid; but it is also true, that I have interfered too much with them; it is I who have brought forward the Abbé de Fénelon, upon the sole reputation of his merit: what displeasure has that not cost me! It is I who ardently desired the See of Paris; what a dreadful business we have now against a prelate, who, though irreproachable in his morals, tolerates the most dangerous party which could rise in the church; who renders his family miserable, and sensibly afflicts the King at a time when his preservation is so necessary! These facts increase my natural timidity. I know that God will judge my inten-

tions, and that they were good, but the evil that one suffers from them is not less great.

LETTER CCLXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, July 22nd, 1714.

I AM well convinced that you discharge all your duties, and it is this which causes you to be the most blamed by those whom your duties do not suit; but from the little experience one has, it is easy to be regardless of what is said. How happy you are in being indifferent! Persons of another temperament never should meddle with anything. I speak like one who is learned upon this point.

It seems to me that all foreigners do not hate France, when they come only to visit it. The Cardinal del Giudice should be well satisfied with us; never was a foreigner so well treated. He is fixed at Marly, not as a courtier, but as a necessary officer near the King's person: he loses no opportunity of seeing him, and is very well received. He is very polite; upon good terms with everybody, and everybody with him; the Cardinal is very circumspect in his conversations, which, with the King, often consist of the praises of the

Prince of Asturias, whom he appears greatly to admire.

LETTER CCLXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Paris, July 30th, 1714.

If I wished to talk to you of marriage, I could tell you often of worse assorted ones than that of the Marquis with your Irish lady. It seems to me that there have been such matches at all times; formerly they were rare, and what is uncommon at present is for a nobleman to marry a lady of his own rank. Our little Dauphin is impatient to put on boy's clothes, and his governess, the Duchess de Vantadour, is not less so. You have done better to wait till your Prince is near seven years old; I think them much more engaging in their frocks when they are so little; but the chief point is that he still lives, and it is no small merit for your two children to be healthy; it is to be hoped that the King will have an Infanta for our Dauphin.

Marshal de Villeroi is absent too long, which I do not say from the profound politics of our courtiers, who think his absence may be injurious to the See of Lyons on one part, and to the place

of M. de Beauvillicrs on the other, as it is thought the latter will soon resign. My views are not extensive, and it is for the King's pleasure that I could wish this Marshal here; for the remembrance of the past between persons of nearly the same age is very agreeable.

Your Cardinal del Giudice becomes every day a better courtier: you will not complain that there is not sufficient distinction made between him and other foreigners. I am very glad to hear that all proceeds well at Barcelona, and that there is reason to hope the rebels will be soon reduced. The affairs of the church are not accommodated, and we daily expect a complete rupture of the conferences.

LETTER CCLXXX.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, August 5th, 1714.

THE news from Barcelona is good: it appears to me that the orders from Madrid are thought very severe here, and might drive the people to despair.

Do not imagine that I think you in a pleasant situation, as I am very far from it, and I understand many things about this subject which many others do not. I am very sorry for the manner in

which the Emperor treats your sovereignty, and it is easily perceived that he wishes to make you bear the brunt of his resentment against our two Kings. Do not think that I suppose the King of Spain could conduct himself so as to incur no blame, which, I believe, never happened to any Prince; to you is imputed everything; but you know better than I do, that we have only to do our best, and let those talk who will not be silent.

What you must have heard concerning M. M. du Maine and de Toulouse, furnishes ample matter of conversation to our courtiers; but it has been subsequently acknowledged that what the King does for them injures no person. It is said, however, that the Dukes are alarmed at it. It is affirmed at Paris, where there is still more freedom of speech, that the King educates these two Princes in the view of giving them a greater influence in the regency, and to balance the credit of the Duke of Orleans. Others say that it is the fruit of a wise and sound policy; but everybody hopes alike that the race of the Bourbons will never be extinct. The truth is, that these two Princes are full of honour, probity, religion, attachment for the King, the state, and the direct line of succession. I do not speak to you as a person prejudiced for either of them; it is a truth acknowledged by all sensible people in this country.

I do not see Cardinal del Giudice, but I often hear others speak of him; he continues to pass for an excellent courtier.

LETTER CCLXXXI.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, August 12th, 1714.

I HAVE missed writing to you one post, which I must have done by some courier: I do not know if it may be the case with you, having received your letter of the 17th, I shall not receive one by the post, for I know that the latter has been brought by a courier, the bearer of the ratifications of the peace with Holland, with which some fault is already found, and which will prolong the conclusion: it is on such occasions that you are blamed for never doing anything but tardily, which, being so far off as you are, causes great delays in our affairs. My acquaintance with M. Voisin took place many years before the services which he has rendered to Saint Cyr, as it began in 1691, when we were at Mons, where he was intendant. You may rely upon it that he is a very honest, upright, firm, and industrious minister; very assiduous in business, which he goes through easily, without ill humour and intrigue, and who will always decide for the best.

I was not surprised at the Chancellor Pontchartrain, who is above seventy-two; having dozed at

the council, seeing that he had lost the King's confidence by being of the Jansenist party, and he had just lost a beloved and esteemed wife. He retires very rich, and thus recovers his repose and liberty, seeing at his ease those of the party, who are mostly men of talent: I think there is nothing very surprising in this. The Duke de Beauvilliers died yesterday evening, leaving a widow in great affliction. The Chancellor, who has the King's confidence in the unhappy affairs of the church, endeavours to arrange them, and has some hopes of success. You will perhaps have already heard of the death of the Princess de Vaudemont. If the news from England be true, it will throw us into fresh alarms,

LETTER CCLXXXII.

TO THE SAME.

Saint-Cyr, August 19th, 1714.

I HAVE no particular secret to confide to you, it is my feelings and opinions which I should wish to communicate to you at every opportunity. You see clearly that is impossible, for which reason I often desire to drop all correspondence, and to abandon you all to the court and public affairs which have never been to my taste: The Abbé

de Villeroi is named Archbishop of Lyons, and must have had a good account given of him to the King, as to his tenets and morals, otherwise he would never have had this nomination, notwithstanding all his friendship for the Marshal. I am of your opinion, that conscience should not stand in the way of choosing a man of good reputation. I can witness for myself before God, that my intentions were upright as to the prelates you mentioned to me, which is a great consolation, but it does not obviate all chagrin, and you may easily conceive that I suffer much in seeing Cardinal de Noailles as the greatest cause of affliction the King now has.

The Countess de Ribera will cut a great figure here, if she resembles the portrait you give of her, and be an ornament to the fine family which she will find. Cardinal del Giudice is going to Chantilly with the Duchess and all the youth of the court, amounting to fifty-five persons. The Princess de Conti, her daughter, and the Duchess, her daughter-in-law, do not go, because they are pregnant. I am sorry that this stranger will see Chantilly in such a ruinous state; for that admirable residence, and its fine gardens, are, it is said, as if a curse hung over them.

At length Queen Anne is dead, and had in the interval between two apoplectic fits, sufficient presence of mind to sign every thing that was contrary to the interest of the King, her brother.

This Prince wished to set out, the moment he heard the news, and our Queen of England shewed great courage in consenting to it, but when all that had taken place respecting the Duke of Hanover was known, the King was prevented from going to expose himself to certain peril. Your Marshal de Villeroy is very slow in his expeditions; it does not appear to me that he will return so soon: it is very right not to hang any one till after mature deliberation; but I could wish him always near the King. We expect every moment to hear of the reduction of Barcelona, but it is not probable, as you say, that this can take place without a serious loss. Marshal de Villars took leave of me yesterday: he is going to Baden, but I think will not be long absent.

LETTER CCLXXXIII.**TO THE SAME.**

Saint Cyr, August 26th, 1714.

THE last news that we have from Barcelona, does not promise a speedy surrender: these people defend themselves as if in a state of desperation, and such opponents are always to be feared. I have this morning received a letter

from Cardinal Gualtério, who speaks of the Princess of Parma nearly in the same terms as you do. I wish sincerely that she may please the King. The memory of your dear Queen will not suffer by it: we have reason to hope that she is better off than she was, and that she thinks very differently to us.

Our Dauphin is in boys' clothes: he is a beauty for the pencil; but I prefer frocks when children are so little: he is very well at present. The nuptials of the Prince de Soubise will take place at Versailles on account of Madame de Ventadour, as soon as we are gone. The Prince de Vaudemont is inconsolable, and will not come to Fontainebleau: I am sorry he declines it so soon, for I have a high opinion of men's fortitude: everybody regrets the privation of his society, for he is very much beloved at our court. It is true that there is no place where it is so brilliant as at Fontainebleau: but it is also much changed, and the void is perceptible every moment. The Duchess de Berri is very eccentric: she secludes herself every day in the most dismal room of her house, with two or three young women. Madame sees nobody but on great occasions, and the Duchess of Orleans is very retired and indolent: she sends, however, invitations for the Dukes to dinner. Madame, who is fond of pleasure, sits up all night, runs about all day, and often goes to Paris. Her

daughter-in-law is prudent, serious, weak, and not over fond of society: she is now with the Princess, who thinks her pregnant. The Princess de Conti receives the old lords and most of the serious ladies at her house. The taste for country houses has become general: the Duchess of Orleans goes to Etoile, Madame to the Désert, the Princess de Conti to la Chaussée; Madame du Maine to Sceaux; the Count de Toulouse to Rambouillet; the King to the chase, or closetted; so that one sees nobody all the afternoon. Individuals have also their pleasure houses, where they entertain their friends, which also diminishes the court. It appears to me, however, that Cardinal del Giudice does not dislike this mode of life; he comes from Chantilly, where he had fifty persons at table. It was reported yesterday that the plague is at Beauvais, and that forty persons are already dead of it. If this news is confirmed, it is very alarming.

LETTER CCLXXXIV.**TO THE SAME.**

Fontainebleau, September 1st, 1714.

THE good news from Catalonia has not continued, for we have had some bad, which cannot

fail to embolden the rebels ; it is thought here that you are very severe towards them, and it is always dangerous to make people desperate. Yes, Madam, I believe you are often in trouble, and I shall ever think that great stations are accompanied by great afflictions, but they are too much envied for those who possess them to be pitied. I could heartily wish that the part I take in your troubles might in some measure diminish them.

I cannot believe that Prince Eugene has spoken in the manner you represent ; your birth is sufficiently known without needing to be illustrated by employments : I should not pity you so much if you had nothing else to torment you.

No, Madam, there are no honours to be put in competition with a life of repose : but God does not destine every one for this, and we must serve in the station in which we are placed : it is a great consolation to be able to do good, and you can certainly do it.

I am very sorry for the non-arrival of the Princess of Parma, for I partake of the King's impatience : she is highly spoken of, and her country much grieved at parting with her, which looks well.

The Duke de Beauvilliers died this evening. I do not think that M. de Villeroy's absence will be prejudicial to him. The King of Spain has great reason to fear your removal from your

Princes : you are more necessary to them than to the Queen.

At last we are at Fontainebleau, which the King has again embellished : they have taken away the little garden that projected into the pond, and nothing can be more magnificent than the court of the fountains.

I am not so well satisfied with the demolition of the small house of the Count d'Auvergne, which was at the end of the alley opposite my great window, for it exposes to view a miserable street. I am quite sorry that your Cardinal will see this fine place deprived of many attractions by the persons we have lost ; for there are no more ladies to do the customary honours, and you know they are essential in collecting company together.

I do not know why you and Marshal de Villeroi should play so cold a part as to write to me very affectionately respecting each other, when it would be better to have a more direct correspondence, though I do not refuse the honour of your confidence

LETTER CCLXXXV.

TO THE SAME.

Fontainebleau, September 9th, 1714.

You are very right, Madam, in relying upon the truth, without giving yourself the trouble of explaining it, and convincing us so far off; who might pass all our life in very useless conjectures. You have the grandeur, consideration, lustre and envy which attach to stations as distinguished as yours, and at the same time you suffer their inconveniences.

My esteem for the Chancellor becomes stronger every day; it is true, for I like to tell you the truth, that I admired his lady less when I saw more of her.

The Chancellor de Pontchartrain confessed to the King, that he could not think as he did upon the affairs of the church, therefore I cannot reproach myself with having written to you that he was favourable to the Jansenist party.

I am quite of your opinion with respect to great men; I am more disgusted with them every day; they commit great faults, and can keep within no bounds; a moderate understanding, with probity, is much preferable. The Duchess de Beauvilliers has gone to Montargis, and entered a convent,

where her daughters are; the body of her husband arrived there two days after her. I believe her grief heavy and sincere; time will console her.

Marshal de Villeroi is at the height of his ambition; I wish with all my heart, before he becomes a mysterious minister, he could fly to you, to let you into the secret of what is passing here; he wishes to display a prudent conduct, in concluding the business which took him to Lyons; I am delighted that you have written to him. It is true that Cardinal de Noailles has wished to enlist in his concerns the Cardinals d'Estrées and de Polignac; the former extricated himself from it very leisurely, the other negotiates as well as he can, but as yet he has done nothing; it is said that he wishes to adopt a middle course, but it is said this cannot be done in the affairs of the church.

The Prince de Vaudemont appears hitherto inconsolable, yet he will be consoled sooner than he thinks. It is not true that the Cardinal de Rohan is lowered in the King's opinion; he has conducted himself very well, and he is the only one of all those concerned to whom this unfortunate business does the greatest honour; he has evince more knowledge and capacity than he was thought to possess, and all the mildness and uprightness that could be desired.

It is as well to divert our thoughts from the

consequences the death of the Queen of England may produce ; every day brings its calamity.

I feel a great interest in the Princess of Parma, on account of a Prince whose happiness I so much wish to promote.

LETTER CCLXXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, September 26th, 1714.

WE partake of your inquietude respecting the siege of Barcelona, and we wait with extreme impatience the result of the general assault which was to be made.

If all the ministers had as solid an understanding as the Chancellor, affairs would be easy to manage ; I am strengthened every day in the good opinion I have of him. You and I live, if I dare use the expression, in the centre of revolutions : Cardinal del Giudice has appeared to us a very sensible man, affectionately attached to the King his master, very fond of the Prince of Asturias, and full of esteem for you ; he seems fully impressed with the merit and goodness of the King, animated by a desire to preserve the union between the two Kings, and all this prepared us for a disgrace. Marshal Villeroy was like an

unfortunate, on bad terms with his master
now he is loaded with honours and marks of
favour which delight him on the score of
friendship, while he is enriched more than any
of our great lords; we expect him on Thurs-
day next.

I think Marshal de Villars will arrive to-day
satisfied with what he has just done, and charm-
ed with Prince Eugene, but with the chagrin of
not being the heir of M. de Beauvilliers.

It is only our poor King and Queen of Eng-
land for whom there is no revolution, and the
British nation has had internal repose for six-
ty-two years. She will, perhaps, begin to
stir up fresh commotion when she has a King
for whom it is soon to be the case.

The description you have given me of the Queen
of Spain is very equivocal; a single word, which
I have seen her, will give me a much more
correct idea. Latin, German, French, dancing,
and singing are agreeable acquisitions, when the

self, and does not evince any pleasure when any person pays their court to her; but she tries, in other respects, to solace herself. The Duchess of Orleans goes on very well in her pregnancy, and is the better for it; she did me the honour of paying me a visit yesterday; she played at piquet, but had nothing to communicate. The great Princess de Conti receives the most grave ladies and gentlemen of the court. The King, who enjoys the best health, is more attached to Fontainebleau than ever; he has fitted up a very beautiful suite of rooms for his own particular use.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Fontainebleau, September 24th, 1714.

I CANNOT believe that, in order to tell me an agreeable thing, you would wish to deceive me; and, on the other hand, I dare not flatter myself that their Catholic Majesties take a pleasure in penning and perusing my letters, which are often only filled with trifles, and frequently written in the midst of chagrin and sadness, which must, I think, produce a corresponding effect on those who read them.

My attachment for his Catholic Majesty would

induce me to derive pleasure from giving him an account of all that passes here, if I could think it would for a moment amuse him; for I certainly entertain a great affection for this Prince; but I could wish to know, as I have often asked you, what subjects are most likely to excite his curiosity; and if he recollects the places, persons, and customs of this country, which are, however, greatly altered within the last fourteen years.

We are rejoicing here at the reduction of Barcelona; the conduct of Marshal de Berwick is very satisfactory, and it is still more so to know that you are masters of all Spain. God grant that you may long enjoy it!

It is not certainly from want of confidence, that I do not communicate secrets to you, but from a prudence which ought always to prevail in letters, and which you observe better than any one. Do not get tired with the affairs of Cardinal de Noailles, since, according to all appearances, it will continue a long time in agitation; they who have had a knowledge of it for the last seventeen or eighteen years, have never thought of seeing it brought to a conclusion in this country. Cardinal de Polignac, who has recently taken a part in it, thought he could approximate the two parties, and caused some steps to be taken with Cardinal de Noailles; but the commissioners of the assembly do not think them sufficient to satisfy the forty bishops, and all those who have joined them.

The Jansenist party is so extended and powerful, that all appear in behalf of Cardinal de Noailles, and neglect nothing to influence the King; but he remains firm in the midst of these storms, and has, within the last two days, once more declared to Cardinal de Rohan and the bishop of Meaux, who are here, that he ardently wishes this affair may be settled if possible, but that he will only sanction an equitable arrangement, preferring the interest of religion to all others, fearless of the troubles which may afterwards arise. This will be welcome news to his Catholic Majesty.

Madame de Caylus will sensibly feel all that you do me the honour of saying on her account, when she is in a condition to hear it, but she is at present much indisposed. I do not doubt but Cardinal del Giudice regrets leaving France; he succeeded too well here to forget it soon. Our Dauphin is in good health. I am delighted that you are satisfied with the King's answer to the English. No one can be better pleased than the Marshal de Villeroi is with it.

The marriage of the Prince de Soubise was celebrated at Versailles with all the pomp, propriety and politeness of the two families, who are certainly the least spoiled of all that we see around us. I do not think that the young bride will appear in public so soon without a suite, as all here are in the habit of doing. I speak not only of Marly, where it is now usual to do so, being in

the gardens and exposed to the gaze of every one; but it is the same at Versailles, and still more so at Paris. My imagination does not extend so far as to see you in the streets, lolling in a calèche or a berlin, for there are no more coaches, with four or five stout lackeys of twenty or thirty years of age behind: for it is thus that our ladies appear even the greatest, and so great that one durst not presume to name them. This does not resemble the house at Versailles, where I had the honour of visiting you, and of passing through one anti-chamber full of servants in livery, another in which were the gentlemen and several young ladies, and you, Madam, in your own room without a back door, where one was sure to find you, unless you had made an invisible retreat from all those around you.

LETTER CCLXXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Fontainebleau, September 30th, 1714.

MARSHAL DE VILLEROI is here; I have sent your letter to him, and I think you will receive his answer in this packet. I see him frequently at our evening musical parties, but he appears to have already become more serious than usual,

which is the lot of those who occupy high stations. I have no difficulty in believing that you find your's very burthensome, for I do not know any other in which so much patience is required to bear against the disappointments, contradictions, and the reproaches to which it is continually exposed. But you are at length relieved from one great source of uneasiness, by the reduction of Barcelona; and we have no doubt but that you will be very well satisfied with the general, whose conduct meets with great approbation here.

It is true that everybody is agreed as to your having few men of talent, and that it would be extremely difficult to find proper persons to fill the higher offices of state at Madrid; but it is observed that you should employ the least unworthy, in order to act with more delicacy towards a nation so meritorious for its fidelity. When you were here, and looking out with the King for an ambassador, you had great difficulty in finding one. It is said that you have lost at Barcelona a very worthy man, who had the honour of being related to you, on which account I am truly sorry.

Do not complain of the opinion which is entertained here of his Catholic Majesty; you would be satisfied with it, if you were near at hand: but is not our King blamed, together with his advisers, and even the persons who stand highest in his estimation? Is it not known that there are

anonymous letters, written from Spain, whose authors, without daring to show themselves, abuse us in every way? They deserve only to be thrown into the fire. I am not surprised that you are tired of your situation: I conceive a part of its bitterness; but the friendship with which you are honoured by the King, and the services you render him in his affairs, and in the person of the Princes, his children, should console you for everything. If all those who are consuming with envy against people in power, were to possess their stations, they would be very much disappointed.

It is certain that the idea which is entertained of M. de Bergheitz has caused those to be blamed, who it is thought could not be reconciled to him; but, as you say, we should see things near at hand in order to form a correct opinion, for I frequently discover that the motives and reasons for what you do are but little known here.

The Elector of Bavaria has set out, after having been amused night and day by the Princesses and the great card players. I am very glad to hear that he has taken away nearly the whole of his money, upon which they had formed grand projects: it is said that M. d'Antin has lost two hundred thousand francs. The court has been more brilliant here in ladies than it is at present, but it has not been more crowded, peace having restored to us all the men, and we have also many foreigners.

On Wednesday there was some music upon the canal : the Elector was in a boat with the Duchess, the King on shore in his calèche, with all the nobility on horseback, and a great number of ladies in small calèches, a little too low, but very pretty, and filled with youth and beauty, which gives these vehicles a more brilliant appearance : for the aged no longer mix with the young ; ladies of honour, mothers and governesses must now form parties of their own.

The departure of the Elector has been succeeded by the arrival of the Electoral Prince of Saxony, who is fifteen or sixteen years of age, handsome and genteel, taller than the King, whose good opinion he obtained at the first interview, and to whom he was presented by Madame ; to-morrow he dines at Madame de Dangeau's, from which circumstance it appears to me that he wishes to attach himself to the Germans. He hunted on Saturday with the hounds of the Duke, which are very excellent ; the King went there out of complaisance and took two stags, one not being enough for him now. He hunted seven hours on Thursday, and returned to the musical party in my room, fresher and gayer than if he had done nothing. He usually attends a stag-hunt twice a week ; and on other days he shoots or takes a walk ; attends four musical parties at my house, or hears some of Molière's best plays read : there are amusements enough ; he holds, however,

more councils than ever, and he gives a number of audiences, either to courtiers or foreigners. He enters into, and attends to business very assiduously, and really his life is a continued miracle ; I never saw him so gay, and he appeared to me duly to appreciate the capture of Barcelona. The alterations he has made at Fontainebleau have rendered it still more agreeable, for he is very well accommodated here, and your King would be surprised to see the beautiful room and the two anti-chambers which he has had constructed, without the appearance of any alteration in the exterior.

The affair of the church is the only thing which gives the King pain : all the projects of accommodation have disappeared, and according to appearances the whole will be referred to Rome, which will give no satisfaction there.

It has occurred to me that our unfortunate Queen of England is a little hurt at your not having intimated to her the marriage of the King of Spain ; the reason for which I cannot conceive, as you are deficient neither in civility or generosity ; and she entertains, on her side, a very great attachment for the King, and much esteem and friendship for yourself.

LETTER CCLXXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Fontainebleau, October 7th, 1714.

I BELIEVE that if you and I were to mix in the world once more we should have no inclination for our correspondence, for I think precisely as you do respecting great wits; with whom nothing seems more common than to commit great faults. M. de Pontchartrain was brought up from his infancy in the party of the Jansenists; having a sister, whom he affectionately loved, and of great virtue, he inspired her with the same opinions; thus were they carried away without knowing how; and I think that of all the women who favour Jansenism, there is not one who knows the degree of grace in man, nor to what extent man can answer for grace; which, however, is said to be the question in agitation. All the negociations of Cardinals d'Estrées and De Polignac, together with that of De Noailles, are at an end; the latter has certainly made some progress; but the members of the assembly do not think it sufficiently great to decide on coming to an accommodation, and the whole is to be sent back to Rome. There remains some ill humour between Cardinals de Rohan and De Polignac, which the good people

of this country do what they can to augment, but it is to be hoped that time will obviate it, as neither of them are naturally of irritable dispositions.

The memorial which the King sends to Cardinal de la Tremoille, is, it appears to me, intended to be regarded as a solicitation to obtain from his Holiness toleration for the mandamus of Cardinal de Noailles, which, if the Pope refuses, it will be necessary to have recourse to very strong measures.

There is to be a promenade round the canal this evening, with music, which will, I dare say, be thought very fine by the Prince of Saxony. He is very young and still under the care of his governor; which all our youth will think him very simple to put up with; in the mean time it appears that he conducts himself with great propriety; he goes to entertainments, and entertains our great lords, ministers, and most sedate ladies, at his own house; he has a number of attendants, and keeps a good table: it is said he has rented a house at Versailles, and that he will be frequently at court; he has more intercourse with Madame than the Elector of Bavaria had. Our return is postponed from the 17th to the 24th; the King amuses himself surprisingly, and his health is very good.

October 8th.

Nothing has taken place about the Cardinal de Rohan, except a furious outcry of the Jansenists,

who have libelled him most atrociously. He has appeared, in all the affair of the church, much more learned than he was thought to be, and he is only blamed for a little too much mildness, which I think you will easily pardon.

Yesterday's promenade was very gay, and the music excellent; but the cold made the ladies pale, notwithstanding the rouge with which they were bedaubed. The crowd was so great that an Irish officer had his leg broken.

I participate in your great joy at the capture of Barcelona. I am not surprised at Marshal de Berwick's letter to M. Orry; there is nobody here who does not admit that there is not a more intelligent, laborious, and expeditious man than the latter; he is only attacked as being prime minister, for which he was not thought capable.

I close my letter in order to receive M. Amclot, whom I cannot place upon the list of troublesome visitors. He asks so seldom to see me, that I never refuse him. It is a great misfortune for our two Kings that there are so few men like him in Spain.

LETTER CCXC.**TO THE SAME.****Fontainebleau, October 20th, 1714.**

I AM very glad that you saw Marshal de Berwick, for it seems to me there is always some good obtained in speaking to an honest man; his Catholic Majesty duly appreciates his merits and services, by what he has done for him.

It is to be wished that your new Queen may make the King happy. She, whom you have lost is, in all probability, very far from being discontented with her situation; we pity the dead only on our own account, and it is a great comfort to think that they are happy.

Cardinal del Giudice appeared at our court such as you have described him to be—a very amiable man, an agreeable courtier, and very capable of public business.

The more I see of the Chancellor, the more I am convinced that his real character is that of a man of solidity; he is a man who rises superior to trifles and laborious, which costs him but little, because he is not devoted to pleasure; nor is he capricious; he is about to be charged with the important affair of the church, along with M. de Torcy.

The negotiation of M. de Polignac had obtained something from Cardinal de Noailles; and, after having lasted four months, the King had allowed to the 17th to receive the mandamus and to send it to Rome with all the solicitations which might induce his Holiness to be satisfied. This mandamus arrived, in effect, on the precise day, but such as it was before the negotiation with Cardinal de Polignac, who is much piqued at the part he has been made to act. As there is no longer any hope of satisfying the Pope, the mandamus will not be sent to him, but an able man to negociate with him on the means that are necessary to be taken, to bring Cardinal de Noailles to reason.

This disagreeable, but important mission, will fall to the lot of M. Amelot, whom the King thinks the best adapted for it; it is affirmed that the national council would be the most mild, speedy and usual method.

Marshal de Villeroy is as satisfied and grateful for the marks of the King's kindness as he ought to be; but I already see him more immersed in business, and a greater slave than he was: it is thus that every thing is of a mixed nature, which I am sure you know by experience.

Do not doubt but Marshal Villars is hurt at not having this place; but he is not a man to complain nor make himself wretched; he is of a happy disposition, and has wherewithal to comfort himself;

he is now at his fine seat of Vaux, which must in future be called Villars, under penalty of a large fine. All our courtiers pass by it in returning; he has entertained Count de Lusace there.

LETTER CCXCI.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, November, 15th, 1714.

We have seen a fine account of the Queen of Spain's journey, by M. de Monaco. If the description he gives of her be correct, the King is very fortunate to meet with two amiable women among the few that are there; but I shall think myself better informed on this subject when I have it from you. I wish, with all my heart, that she may please you, which will be much in her favour.

Never was there so great a crowd of men and women for presentation at Marly; the King would wish to satisfy every one, but the want of accommodation places limits to his condescension.

We have two strangers, the Princess de Soubise and the Duchess de Tallard. The former is neither tall nor handsome, but she has a very modest, noble air, which does honour to the education of the Princess de Vaudemont; the latter is

taller than the Princess de Conti, but not so finely shaped; she resembles Madame de Dangeau in her face; they are both sixteen or seventeen years old.

M. Amelot ought to depart on the 15th, on a very unpleasant mission, in which the King is so much interested that he has taken the greatest pains to select a proper person to be entrusted with it. Cardinal de Noailles runs headlong to his ruin, refusing to hear of any accommodation, whether with his enemies or friends, who are equally dreaded.

The Princess d'Épinay has already refused Madame de Charolois, who asked permission to take the Princess de Soubise to hunt.

Our two Cardinals, de Rohan and de Polignac, are already reconciled, as you had foreseen.

You doubt whether the husbands are agreeable to nocturnal promenades, when it is they who promote them, since jealousy is no longer in fashion, and they] are satisfied after having publicly declared that they do not care for the conduct of their wives. I know not so much about lovers and rivals, for they no longer excite any attention.

The King gave a proof of his good health yesterday; he set out at one o'clock to hunt a stag, without having taken any food, and returned at half past five o'clock, sat down to table, eat heartily, and is wonderfully well.

[REDACTED]

MADAME DE MAINTENON.

LETTER CCXCII.

TO THE SAME.

Paris, November 16th, 1714

It is true that we can neither answer for the great or the little projects of this life: the Queen of Spain causes a great bustle every where, as she travels with a numerous suite. Two days ago I saw a present which the King is sending to her, she calls it a trifle, but which appears to me very magnificent. I did not think that at this time there could be found so many jewels as Madam Desmaretz brought, which would not have astonished me formerly, but it is now a pleasing proof of plenty.

The King has informed the Queen, that he would not send her his portrait, if she was not his grand-daughter, which, I think, will not be an un-acceptable compliment. God grant that she may merit the happiness which awaits her, and that she may contribute to that of his Catholic Majesty!

You are right in saying that you do not act like a great personage by assuming an air of gravity, which we often admired, when you were here the last time, the case with which you passed from the

most serious affairs to the chit-chat of those who appeared to have nothing on their minds ; this is an uncommon talent, and we must hope that your friend, Marshal de Villeroy, will acquire it ; but he seems to me to take things very much to heart. I should be sorry if you deprived me of my esteem for Count de Bergheitz, for I could wish to believe that there is one very honest man in the world, though I can easily comprehend there is none perfect.

Persons who are most agreed as to want of capacity in the Spaniards, assert that it would be necessary to employ the least faulty, in order to obtain the attachment of the nation.

The description which you give me of your ladies of the palace, would give ours the heart-ache, for nothing appears more contemptible to them than to sleep at night, [to love their husbands, to amuse themselves in their presence, and to live constantly in union, and in the enjoyment of innocent pleasures.

Why cannot you think that the Pope will be satisfied with the affairs of the church being referred to him ? The King wishes to act in concert with his Holiness, which disposition ought not, it appears to me, to displease him.

I have had a long conversation with the Prince de Vaudemont ; he profits by the dissipation in which they live here, and the solicitude which the two Princesses, his nieces, evince to amuse him :

he is better, but he knows the loss which he has sustained, and likes to speak of his wife to those who knew her, relating things of her piety which are admirable, but which have not surprised me. He tells me of M. de Lorraine's conduct to the King of England, which is praiseworthy, redoubling his attentions to him as his misfortune increase.

The best things connected with your place are, in my opinion, the establishments which you form for so many persons of birth and merit, and I can easily conceive your joy in consequence.

It is true that the whigs are only anxious for war, but it is to be hoped that the troubles which they are likely to have amongst themselves, will not interrupt the peace. It must be owned that no situation was ever more deplorable than ours, all our happiness depending upon the life of a Prince who is not young. I do not speak on my own account, for I hope never to see what is almost unavoidable, when we shall have the misfortune to lose him.

I wish very much that you may see Marshall de Berwick, as I am of opinion that conversations with worthy and honourable men are never altogether unproductive; but I fear lest the Queen's arrival should make him miss seeing the King. The reports which you communicate are not, as

you say, those of his friends, but we must pay little attention to them.

The Queen of England came here the day before yesterday, in pretty good health, but more depressed than ever, which is inevitable.

One can scarcely believe in the King's health; it is a miracle which is renewed every day; he shot yesterday four-and-thirty times, and killed thirty-two pheasants: vigour, sight, agility, nothing fails him.

M. Amelot will set out for Rome the moment his instructions are prepared.

LETTER CCXCIII.

TO THE SAME.

Paris, November 18th, 1714.

I AM overjoyed at your having embosomed yourself to Marshal de Berwick, and at your consenting to his communicating it to me, as his sincerity may be depended upon, and I have no doubt of yours, when you speak to an honest man.

Certainly M. Amelot's commission is very deplorable, and beset with difficulties. I do not know whether the court of Rome will look upon it as a slight to Cardinal de la Trémoille, but I

am persuaded he will be delighted at having such a second. He will be the bearer of all the instructions, information, and results, of this unhappy affair, of which it is impossible your brother can be well informed. He receives letters from both parties, which renders the truth difficult to unravel. I doubt not of his placing confidence in M. Amelot, whose reputation he must certainly know; but again, they are both to be pitied for having to do with an affair which can never terminate agreeably.

The young people here are not better than at Madrid; they mind nothing but frivolity, to which they add all sorts of folly, at least the greatest part.

Hunting is as much followed here as at Fontainebleau, because the King's health is still the same. The Duchess de Berri hunts on horseback, and in a riding habit, Madame having thought she might do so without violating decorum, thus she is relieved from all manner of constraint: she is said to be of a surprising size.

You will hear of the choice which the King has made of M. de Pompadour, for the embassy to Spain. As you know him better than I do I have nothing more to say; I know a little of his lady, who takes more after her father than her mother.

The Duke d'Antin gave a dinner yesterday at Paris to three Electors; there would have been

fewer had they consulted Madame. The Elector of Bavaria shows little impatience to return to his own states, finding France very agreeable, and the society of the ladies extremely amusing.

LETTER CCXCIV.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, November 25th, 1714.

WHEN I have missed writing it has been because I received no letters from you, and there has been nothing worth writing about.

I do not think that Cardinal de la Trémoille could have dispensed with a man who will let him into the secret of the most difficult affair on earth. M. Amelot has been receiving his instructions concerning it the last fortnight or three weeks from morning till night; nor do I imagine that your brother, having need of a second, could have had one chosen that was more agreeable to him, on your account, and more upright in all his conduct.

The King and the Pope are agreed upon the affair in question, and are endeavouring to concert with each other, to discover the means of terminating a very important matter to religion and the state. I have seen for the last fifteen or

twenty years that it has been only too much tolerated: the party is much more powerful and more extended; and under pretence of maintaining the rights and liberties of the kingdom, they attack directly the authority of the Pope and that of the King.

So many things are said of your Queen, and so little dependance to be placed upon them, that I think it useless to report them to you.

You rightly conceive that I am not astonished at the activity of your King, who is not yet thirty-one years old, since we see ours at sixty-six do the same things; it is a great thing to act as one pleases, and which courtiers rarely do: I shall not pity them, for, in general, I think them neither amiable nor estimable.

The Queen, from what is said of her, will be well qualified to accompany the King in his pleasures; as she shoots well, and is passionately fond of hunting.

It appears to me, from what Marshal de Berwick has told me, that you do great injustice to our government with respect to what concerns you: it is very difficult always to think in the same manner, and not to have to complain of one another, when there are so many affairs which require mutual explanations; but in all other respects, I can assure you, that you are very much esteemed and honoured, and that nobody wishes to get rid of you. It is thought that you have

too great a confidence in M. Orry, and that he has need of being overlooked; but it is agreed that he is a wonderful subaltern.

You are continually blamed for excluding the Spaniards, whose fidelity to their King is greatly admired here; such are really the opinions of the most upright men of this country, and of those whom you esteem the most; if they speak to you otherwise they are not sincere. I think I cannot be too much so with you, and that you will not blame me for what I say.

I was at St. Germain's two days ago; I found the Queen confined to her bed with a slight cold, but oppressed with the deepest melancholy on seeing all her hopes vanished, at least for the present, and separated from the King, her son, whom she affectionately loves: this separation adds to the bitterness of their misfortunes, from the love which they bear to each other, besides which, two establishments almost doubles their expenditure, although they retrench every day something. England does not pay the stipulated allowance, and they are without resources from any other quarter.

LETTER CCXCV.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, December 1st, 1714.

I HAVE no letters from you, but in the mean
I can inform you who this Mademoiselle de
y is. You will, perhaps, be surprised to
that she is sister to the King of Spain, being
a natural daughter of the late Monseigneur, and a
pretty and amiable actress, whose name was
n, and whom you may have seen. Mon-
seigneur left this infant in charge of the Princess
Monti, desiring her to get one of her women to
be educated: she has always been in a con-
fidence, and the circumstance of the nun's knowing
she was, has been the cause of her not taking
any notice. She is quite weary of this mode of life,
and wishes to marry. Her complexion is fair,

very much surprised, for she knows nothing of what it contains, and the Marquis de Laval must have said too much: such is the explanation of what his Catholic Majesty wished to know. It would be desirable that this adventure were not so public as it is; but after all, this poor girl is nobody, since Monsiegnour never acknowledged her. The Princess de Conti often presses the King to get her married, and he consents that a husband should be found for her in some distant province; but the times are so bad, that he does not think he ought to make a distinguished match for her.

From the manner in which you speak of the Queen, she will have something to suffer with his Catholic Majesty if she is delicate, for great Princes are accustomed to judge of others by themselves. It is said she has brought with her a confessor and a physician, whom she wishes to retain. I shall not tell you all that we hear about her: every place that she passes through furnishes some account, and all very different; but as no credit is to be attached to them, I own I pay no attention to what people say, and shall suspend my curiosity till I hear from you, after you have seen her.

M. Amelot has taken leave of the King to-day for his journey to Rome, and I saw him this morning: he is not embarrassed about Cardinal de la Trémoille, and I really think he will find no

erty in that quarter. God grant that it may
in other matters, which are certainly the
difficult! It is most assuredly true, that you
know nobody again, if you were to come
and whenever you did not happen to be
the King, you would doubt whether you
at court; but it is useless to dwell on this
ect, and impossible to remedy the evil.

you may depend upon two undeniable friends,
hal de Villeroi and M. Amelot: it is impos-
to be more active or constant than they are
our behalf.

the Athalié of Racine is to be performed to-day
eaux; you know the beauty of this piece, and
say it will be well acted. There are some
d actors who perform with Madame du Maine:

LETTER CCXCVI.

TO THE SAME.

Saint Cyr, December 9th, 1714.

You are, then, already making excuses for your Queen, and you will not allow it to be her fault that she proceeds so slowly. If you knew all that we hear, you would have many other excuses to make; but we have good sense and experience enough not to believe everything that is said. How can we judge so far off, having such trouble to ascertain the truth of what is passing before us, which I experience every day, and which disgusts me with listening to anything.

The interest I take in everything that concerns his Catholic Majesty, makes me partake of all his impatience to see the Queen; but I do this without examining the causes of it. He does very well to occupy himself in the woods, but I do not think him easily fatigued. God grant that this Princess may be sensible of her happiness in sharing the throne of a great King, and a devout and worthy man! For, I assure you, he is considered in that light; but he will be very often blamed, and you also, which is invariably the case with sovereigns and their servants.

The performance of Athalié has charmed every body.

LETTER CCXCVII.

TO THE SAME.

Saint Cyr, December 16th, 1714.

I THINK I told you how much Marshal de Berwick was satisfied with his short stay at Madrid. If we only listened to persons like him, we might expect to obtain useful information, but there are very few men of this description.

It is true that the Queen proceeds very slowly; she is but ill calculated for travelling, rising late and arriving late: her attendants do not like this, and her suite is very much fatigued with it.

I think it is necessary that his Catholic Majesty should be prepared to find the Princess very plain, for every one is agreed on this point; but, without wishing to meddle in consoling him, having a person with him more capable than I am, it is really my sincere opinion that want of beauty is the least defect of a woman, being that to which one is the soonest accustomed, and the absence of it is not displeasing to God or to men of a solid mind. It is said that she is genteel, that she wishes to please, and is sprightly in conversation. If this is accom-

panied with judgment, discernment, and sweetness of temper, they will efface the effects of the small-pox. If, on the other hand, that philosophy which she has studied so much, has formed her mind, she will be a very suitable partner for the King. Should the Latin, which she knows so well, be only for the King, it will also be an agreeable accomplishment. If all the languages with which she is familiar are employed to please him, do they not afford great resources for conversation? If that devotion, which causes her to take the sacrament every week, is solid and correct enough to make her live up to the duties of her station, what a treasure of sympathy for the King! who is very condescending in thinking in the same manner upon what is of importance.

It is said she places great confidence in her confessor: it would, however, be deplorable, if she had not liberty of conscience. I speak to you freely, for I know your prudence, and I depend upon your friendship. Mademoiselle d'Aumale quarrels with me because I make light of music, and this Princess is a connoisseur; she composes and accompanies her own pieces on the harpsichord.

M. Amelot has set out furnished with ample instructions, and he is so well intentioned, that I hope for some success from his journey.

I scarcely ever see Marshal de Villeroi, at least in private. The bad weather prevents the King

from going out, so that he is much more at my house, and at other times in the council, where the Marshal also goes.

It is true that M. and Madame de Pompadour are fixed upon going to Spain, and that they are delighted with it on account of you, from whom they hope great protection. I know but little of M. Pompadour, but it is quite otherwise with regard to his wife, who is certainly a woman of honour and probity, since I am better informed than any one else of the proof she has given of those virtues which have won my esteem. I confess she is much to be pitied in leaving the Duchess de Berri, and her attachment to this Princess is so well known that my secretary is greatly affected at so unpleasant a separation.

The three millions, which the King gives to the Elector of Bavaria, is truly a royal present; if he could expend them at St. Cloud he would feel very happy, for he cannot bring himself to the resolution of quitting France.

The Elector of Cologne wished to take with him his likeness in wax, for which purpose he had his face covered with plaster, and when it was necessary to take it off, the skin of the forehead and nose came along with it, in which plight he was obliged to sup at M. d'Antin's, with the Duchess and the whole of her gay court.

LETTER CCXCVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Saint Cyr, December 24th, 1714.

NEVER did an affair require more circumspection than that which is now in agitation, and the Cardinal de la Trémoille will view it in this light, when M. Amelot shall have had some conversation with him. It is to be hoped they will devise some expedient to get the constitution received, and to allay what takes place on Cardinal de Noailles account; but as for sincere reconciliation, I do not believe this can ever be effected.

There will always be some minds fond of novelty, and who, under pretence of reformed morals, will seduce others; and there are also solid minds, who will abide by ancient catholicism, and who will be attached to the church and its chief, notwithstanding all the abuses which may creep into it from time to time, but which do not destroy the faith.

I shall hear with pleasure of the disunion of the whigs and the tories, because it would ensure us peace. It is said that the new King of England and his subjects are mutually disgusted with each other. God grant that the whole may be restored to better order! I dread the negociation of Stan-

hope, as it appears to me he has always been furious against our two Kings.

It is not I who appoint the ambassadors; the chancellor has more to do than any other person in the choice which the King has made of M. de Pompadour; I do not know him at all. The Duchess de Noailles made him quit the army at an early age; they have lived far from the court since that time, and very rarely appeared there. I heard a great deal of the good sense and piety of Madame de Pompadour: as the Duke de Noailles had been governor to the Duke of Orleans, this family naturally belonged to his court; and Madame de Courcillon being of the same age as the Duchess de Berri, was often with her during their childhood.

When the question of finding a lady of honour for the Queen was discussed, the Duchess of Orleans mentioned Madame de Pompadour, and I gave her all the praise which I had heard of her. The Duke of Orleans decided for Madame de Saint Simon, because of the title, all which took place with the King in my room. When a governess was wanted for the children of the Duke de Berri, Madame de Pompadour was also named; but she had little to do, and, besides, she did not please the Princess. M. de Pompadour, tired of being idle, very anxious to serve the King, and reckoning upon your friendship, wished for the embassy to Spain; and if they are not de-

ceived in the confidence which they place in you, I hope they will succeed in it: I wish it with all my heart, for Madame de Pompadour's conduct has, in every respect, made me esteem her very much. Such is, very candidly, all that I have had to do in this business.

They must be out of their senses in this country if they wished to get rid of you, as, without reckoning what would be lost by it, what would be gained by it? Is there any one more enlightened, rational, and more truly French than you are, to be placed near his Catholic Majesty? But I conceive that you have an idea of quitting all: there is nothing can compensate you for your troubles, some of which I can divine, but not the whole.

LETTER CCXCIX.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, December 31st, 1714.

It is true that the King of Sicily has sent a very shabby ring to M. Amelot, and which the King has ordered him to accept.

You have too much intellect to calculate upon the gratitude of courtiers; the court is the place where there ought to be the purest virtue; yours is of that character, and it forms your greatest

happiness. No, Madam, our court is not amusing; one would be happy if it were even supportable; all our joy arises from the King's good health, we must divert our attention from every other subject.

I am truly grieved at your telling me that the King would be afflicted if the Queen is plain, for we cannot have a doubt of it. I pity her on account of her confessor; the late Queen was a child in comparison; our dear Dauphiness, placing no great confidence in the confessor, provided for her, confessing herself sometimes privately at Saint Cyr; there are great inconveniences in not possessing liberty of conscience.

The marriage of M. de Goëdbriant with Mademoiselle de Chatillon has taken place; we have not seen her yet; she received magnificent presents and in a most gallant way; among others, a pair of ear-rings which cost forty thousand francs, and a diamond band enclosed in a work basket, the whole given by M. Desmaretz.

We have heard of M. Amclot's being very well, and prosecuting his journey to Rome: Grant that he may be successful when once there!

LETTER CCC.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, January 12th, 1715.

I do not know what is the strongest emotion in me, grief at your predicament, or astonishment at what has befallen you. I have been a long time prepared by you for your retirement, and I was not surprised at it; but I confess that I never thought you would have quitted Spain like a criminal; we must be silent when our misfortunes are caused by those whom God has constituted our masters. I hope you will do me the justice to believe I am not insensible to your sufferings, and I am very anxious to hear from you. You owe everything to Marshal de Villeroi, who is quite beside himself; in other respects all is shared between your triumphant enemies and terrified friends. It is Marshal de Villeroi who finds me an opportunity of sending this letter; you know that I have couriers at my disposal. Inform me what you wish to do, what to be said, and what you intend as secret; I shall not be wanting in returning the friendship with which you have honoured me; I see few persons, but I must say in justice to Madame de Ventadour and Madame de Caylus, that they are deeply affected. I have just re-

ceived a letter from M. de Noirmontier, who furnishes me with another opportunity of writing to you, which I shall not fail to embrace.

LETTER CCCI.

TO THE SAME.

Saint Cyr, January 12th, 1715.

THE Duke de Noirmontier has just written to me concerning you, and he offers me an opportunity of sending you this letter, I have already embraced that afforded me by Marshal de Villeroi. I know not, however, what to say to you, as I have no expressions for my thoughts, nor is it prudent to utter them, and we expect to hear from you, to know what we have to say and do. You know the King well enough to judge of his sentiments respecting you. I hope, from your fortitude, that you will be able to support your health, and I pray God to impress strongly upon your mind that he alone deserves to be loved.

All Saint Cyr puts up prayers for you:

LETTER CCCII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, January 20th, 1715.

I HAVE certainly been very much astonished at the treatment you have received, of which nothing more must be said, from the respect due to our superiors, and I have been very much affected at what you had to suffer during such a journey, all the circumstances of which makes me look upon it as a miracle that you have borne it so well. As I was at Saint Cyr yesterday, I have not yet seen your letter to the King. It is a long time since I wrote to you that nothing is concealed from me, because I am not distrusted, but that nothing is regularly communicated to me, because my advice is not looked for, so that I am always very ill informed. I am impatient to hear of your future plans, from the sincere interest I take in them, which is all I have to say.

It is out of the question to send you an account of the deaths and marriages of the court, from which, however, must be excepted M. de Cavoie, who was at the point of death when we heard of your disgrace here; it is said that on recovering he spoke very boldly of this event, making your

panegyric. I pray God that you may attach yourself to him who will never desert us. I do not know who will be sent to you, nor shall I, till he is gone. You are jocular upon your bad fare; and though I cannot bear raillery upon your situation, yet I admire your courage.

P.S. There never was such a friend as Marshal de Villeroi, of which there is no need to assure you, but I cannot help it.

LETTER CCCIII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, January 28th, 1715.

I AM delighted to receive news from you, for I always dread lest you should be cast down after so many sufferings; you have need of all your fortitude, but your mind has always appeared stronger than your body, which is not formed to live on black bread, and lie on the ground. Your disgrace arises from such a quarter, that one dare not speak. Marshal de Villeroi and myself have separately seen the letter which you have written to the Marquis de Torcy, but we must defer the discussion of some of its contents till your arrival here.

You cannot place too much dependence upon Marshal de Villeroi, as I really think you would re-

quire less than what he does for you. Take care of yourself, Madam, and come and speak to the King; it is all I can see that is to be done at present. You stand as high as ever in my opinion, for my esteem was not attached to the great personage, but to the person, who will always be highly respected.

LETTER CCCIV.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, February 3rd, 1715.

If the visit from M. de Lanty could render you the least service, I would not hesitate to receive him, but in the present conjuncture, it might only irritate your enemies and mine, and place to my account all that others impute to him as having said, when he is gone: I cannot remain ignorant of what he will have said to the King and M. de Torcy, so that he could only repeat the same things to me. It appears to me, that you have no need of justification respecting your disgrace, since you are not accused; for I do not think there are any persons amongst those who love, and even those who hate you, who are persuaded that you have shown a want of respect to the Queen in not going far enough to meet her; or

that you said something improper to her in the first interview. There is then nothing to be said as to what concerns you, nor as to anything else; out of respect to the King and Queen of Spain, you must be silent, and endeavour peaceably to the pass remainder of so chequered a life. It is said you are in a very bad state of health, but will not complain; this is, however, a very important point. It appears to me, that you have not received all our letters, the reason of which I cannot conceive, as I have neglected no opportunity of assuring you of the continuance of my respect and attachment.

LETTER CCCV.**TO THE SAME.****Versailles, February 8th, 1715.**

I THINK you must have by this time received all the answers which you expected from me, about quitting Saint Jean de Luz, and that we shall have the honour of seeing you as soon as you possibly can. Till then, I shall not expect to have correct information as to what has occurred, for up to the present time, I am quite in the dark with regard to your real situation. It is said that the Prince de Lanty has discharged his commission very well: I asked the King if he

had been informed of anything fresh by him, and he replied in the negative; I even know that some of your best friends, having asked him questions, he answered very prudently, that he preferred silence; and indeed it appears to me that he is not quoted upon this business.

Marshal de Villeroi has sent to tell me that we have only to wait for you, so that I have solely the honour of writing to show that my mind is occupied respecting you. I have not the courage to send you any court news; I could wish to see you live in tranquillity, and am well convinced that I interest myself as sincerely as Marshal de Villeroi in all that concerns you.

LETTER CCCVI.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, February 15th, 1715.

No, Madam, I shall not shut my door against you; and although we have only the most dismal matters to talk of, I am very impatient to find myself at liberty with you: let your friend advise you, for there never was a better, and if he had been believed, you would still be upon the pinnacle more honoured and looked up to than ever. Every one does not think alike. I find as few

things to write to you about as I shall have many to say, when I see you, for I think there is no necessity to make you renewed protestations of my sincere and respectful attachment.

It is wonderful that you travel without being incommoded by it; your courage must support you. Marshal de Montrevel adds greatly to his former merits, from the manner in which he conducts himself towards you.

LETTER CCCVII.

TO THE SAME.

Versailles, February 18th, 1715.

You approach a spot where joy is a stranger; but it will be impossible for me, however, not to feel a pleasurable emotion, when I shall have the honour of seeing you: Marshal de Villeroy will fix the hour and place, and it is he who insists upon my having the honour of writing to you to-day, which I should not have done, having only fresh assurances to make you of an attachment, of which I should be sorry if you entertained the least doubt.

LETTERS OF

LETTER CCCVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Saint-Cyr, Good Friday.

It has not occurred to me, that our enemies might think you too near, and I am at a loss to know what distance they would wish us to be from each other; but you are better at Paris than at Saint Germain's, having no person there with you.

Marshal de Villeroi is fond of doing me acts of kindness. My intentions are good, but my credit is trifling, which I have always told you, and I could wish that the event might convince me of too great backwardness. You are free in your conduct at Paris; and you will see every thing which you wish there, being possessed of a politeness so opposite to incivility. I am often indisposed, but slightly, since I always recover from it, and I hope to be able to go as far as M. Mansera's. In whatever state I am, I shall be faithfully and sincerely attached to you.

MADAME DE MAINTENON.

LETTER CCCIX.

TO THE SAME.

Saint Cyr, April 3d, 1

YOUR communications would be very delightful if you spoke a little more of yourself, which reproach seldom to be made; but it is astonishing that you are so little occupied with your concerns, and so much so with the interests of others. It is moreover wonderful that you can go to visit Saint Cyr at your ease, and that in the state in which you are. Indeed your court is very surprising, and nobody will believe what I tell you of it. It is for you to arrange your journey with the Queen of England. There are many days of processions or other devotions which must be avoided. Had it been necessary to indicate one possible place for Saint Cyr, I should have been very embarrassed; but as you will pass several days together at Saint Germain, it will be easy for you to find me here. I will not say that I shall be myself much at ease with you, which I cannot do till I see you in a fixed state; I dare not promise a more certain one, for after your case, no man appears to me so in the world. I was impatient to know how you liked our Dauphin; and I was with joy that you were charmed with him; his appearance and mind are very prepossessing.

When I shall be informed of the time of your intended visit, I will send a man to meet you, in order that you may reach this by the shortest and best road. If I could surmount great difficulties as well as small, you would see on every occasion the sincere attachment I have for you.

LETTER CCCX.

TO THE SAME.

Saint Cyr, May 5th, 1715.

I FLATTER myself that I am not quite forgot between you and Marshal de Villeroi; he knows my sentiments for you, and they are so similar to his own in every thing which concerns you, as well as generally upon passing events, that he has wished to form an union which often makes us speak like monks. We complain together, we lament our situation together, and very often yours, which requires all your fortitude.

Are you still satisfied with Spain? Do you wish it every prosperity? I have said enough.

The King is very well, as is also the Dauphin, which are the only circumstances to console us. It is true that Mademoiselle de Fleury marries M. ———. He contents himself with certain bills to the amount of fifty thousand crowns,

which M. Desmaretz thinks would have produced but little. However it may be, the Princess de Conti cannot be too much commended for endeavouring to establish this girl, as well as she would have been able to do, under the eyes of the Dauphin.

Marshal de Villeroi will tell you that we are to have a court again at Marly. He is not so reasonable on this point as I am, and will explain it to you.

LETTER CCCXI.

TO THE SAME.

Saint Cyr, May 14th, 1715.

ALTHOUGH so long a time has elapsed since you did me the honour of writing to me, I have not thought the less of you, having only too many causes to do so; and though Marshal de Villeroi should be the sole motive, it would be difficult to forget you. Indeed you ought to be charmed with him; and the Duke de Noirmoutier cannot be more occupied respecting you than he is. I admit that owing to your not being able to remain in France, I have always wished you at Rome, as I cannot but think you would there command the consideration which it is impossible to refuse you. Whatever persecution you may endure from for-

tune, I hope that your courage, good sense, and amiable disposition will make you happy wherever you are, and in spite of all those who may wish to injure you. I fear only on your account, the inconveniences, and especially the accidents which might threaten your sight. But God is merciful, and will not chasten more than to the extent you can bear.

LETTER CCCXII.

TO THE SAME.

Marly, July 14th, 1715.

At length you utter the language of complaint! I think for the first time I have heard it, and which would be very difficult to believe, after all that you have endured for six months.

I did not imagine that the Pope would have refused you an asylum at Rome, but I feared lest your enemies would have time to thwart this design, and that was one of my reasons for so much pressing your departure: in the mean time, I am assured that the nuncio has declared to you, that you may go to Rome upon the King's promise to obtain the consent of the King of Spain, his grandson.

It is true that the Queen of Spain has done

me the honour to write me by Prince Cellamare, and that I have answered her; but I have received another letter which would have affected you more, as it is from your dear Prince of Asturias, whose style and writing do not appear to be those of a child. There was one also from the King; the ambassador wished to deliver them to me himself, but the King thought it more proper for me not to see him. I seclude myself as much as possible, which you know has long been my taste, and which every passing scene has not changed; age and infirmities confirm it, and your affair ought to disgust all those who are capable of any reflection. Your fortitude can only proceed from God, to whom I devoutly pray to comfort you.

LETTER CCCXIII.**TO THE SAME.****Marly, September 11th, 1715.**

You are very kind to have thought of me in the great event which has just taken place; we have only to bow in submission to the hand which has struck us. I could wish with all my heart that your situation were as happy as mine. I have seen the King die like a saint and a hero.

I have quitted a world which I did not like, and am in the most tranquil retreat I could desire, but wherever I am, I shall be, whilst life continues, with the respect and attachment due to you.

LETTER CCCXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Saint Cyr, December 27th, 1715.

It is true that I remove as far from the world as it is possible, and that if my friends had a little less kindness for me, I should no longer see anybody; but it is also true, that I do not forget those whom I have esteemed, loved, and honoured; and that I think very often of you, wishing for you, what I believe is best. I should have thought that you would go to Rome, and I was very glad of it, on account of your sight; mine has a very different fate: I have left off the glasses which I began to use five-and-thirty years ago, and I work in tapestry day and night, for I sleep little; my retreat is peaceable and very complete. As to society, one cannot have any with persons who are strangers to what I have seen, and who have been brought up in this house, whose regulations alone they are acquainted with.

There is no situation in life without its troubles ; your strong mind, fortitude and amiable disposition, have always contributed to diminish your calamities. Our Marshal rarely visits me, but I am under daily obligations to him ; he is the refuge of all the wretched. You would be well satisfied with what the public say of his deserts ; I know persons who do not like him, that have but one opinion as to his noble character.

Believe, Madam, that I cannot forget the proofs of your kindness for me, and that I shall die with the same attachment for you. These terms are not sufficiently respectful, but you are well able to appreciate the source from whence they spring.

END OF THE LETTERS

OF

MADAME DE MAINTENON.



LETTERS

OF THE

PRINCESS DES URSINS.

LETTER I.

TO MADAME DE MAINTENON.

Bordeaux, July 7th, 1705.

I LEAVE this city, Madam, without having had the satisfaction of receiving any letters from you; should I not find some at Bayonne, through which I shall merely pass, it will be a great privation, in the new vexations I am about to suffer. The nearer I approach Spain the less I feel able to support the heat of the weather. I am still ill with my cold, but, thank heaven, I have no longer any fever. Since I left Amboise, I travel only by night; I set out at six o'clock in the evening, and

arrive about eight in the morning: if I were to act otherwise, I should get on but slowly. This irregularity, however, fatigues at last, for there are no means of reposing during the day at the inns, which are of the worst kind on this road. While travelling between Ville-Fagnan and Aigne, a few days ago, I experienced the most violent storm of thunder, rain, and hail that I had ever seen. It began at midnight; the night became so dark that my postillions, no longer knowing which way to go, I was forced to wait the break of day in the middle of a field; this storm lasted three hours, with such a frightful continuation of the thunder, that I expected every instant to be struck by it. The chaises which followed me were all overturned or broken down, but no person was seriously hurt. Such, Madam, has been the most disagreeable circumstance I have as yet experienced. The moonlight is very favourable to me, and I take advantage of it as much as possible. On Friday next I hope to be at Saint Jean de Luz before six in the morning. The imprisonment of the Marquis de Leganez, Madam, was very proper. This act was necessary for re-establishing the authority of the King of Spain, and you ought to entertain great hopes of M. Amelot's embassy, after such a wise and bold commencement. I have received several letters from Spanish grandees; none of them mention this measure, but no one complains; on the con-

trary, it seems to me they have a great esteem for the new ambassador, and that they are very well satisfied with Orry; for, notwithstanding that they press me to hasten my journey, they confess that very clever men have been sent to them. M. Amelot is delighted with their Catholic Majesties, and he writes to me positively that he cannot conceive through what malignant influence the justice which is their due, is not rendered to them; these are his very words. He is no less pleased with Orry; and, on the other hand, the King and Queen of Spain do me the honour to thank me for the part I have had in the choice of such a worthy man, who is so capable of serving them well. These beginnings, which will be, I assure you, followed by miraculous consequences, ought fully to satisfy the King respecting Spanish affairs. They no longer embarrass me since I have heard that the enemy is gone into garrison. We shall certainly be in a state to resist them in the month of September, and I have no hesitation in asserting that we shall be stronger than them next year, whatever efforts they make. This, Madam, will clearly prove our zeal for the King's service, and the misconduct of those who have latterly directed Spanish affairs.

I did not meet the Duke de Grammont, because he went by the Saintes road, which is a different one from that of the posts. He has said here, that my return to Spain caused the conspiracy

which has been discovered. I am still astonished that he can be my enemy, never having given him any reason for it; but I am much more surprised that he should spread such vulgar slanders, which prove nothing more than his own malignity. For is it I who have prevented the Marquis de Leganez from taking the oath of allegiance? Is it I who has forced him to say he owes all his fortune to the house of Austria? And is it my return, or my arrival in Spain, that caused him to be summoned to France as a suspicious person, before the King had the goodness to think of me, and to present my services to the Queen? Such sorry attacks, Madam, would give me little uneasiness, while guided by my principles, which induce me to act for the best, and allow anything to be said; but experience obliges me to use some precaution. The only one I wish to take, is to intreat of you to attend only to facts, and despise everything else. The Spanish nation ought to be offended, it is said, at the selection of an ambassador of M. Amelot's inferior rank; yet he has been very well received, and is much esteemed. Orry was to have been stoned to death when entering Madrid, and yet all the grandees have visited him. His return was to have caused the Spaniards to detest me; but, on the contrary, they show a still greater desire to have me near them; in short, Madam, there is nothing verified of all that my enemies have asserted. Have the kindness,

therefore, if you please, to consider them as persons blinded by their passions, and who sacrifice everything to their animosity. When I am certain that you are convinced of this, I shall experience such a tranquillity of mind as will soon enable me to aid M. Amelot, and merit, by an undivided attention to the affairs of Spain, the confidence with which the King is pleased to honour me. Do me the favour I request, Madam, to be ever equally assured of my sincere attachment.

P. S. I have experienced every kind of honour and politeness in this city, by order of the Marshal de Montrevel, as well as personally from himself; you may well suppose, Madam, he was thereby desirous to please the King, knowing how much I am honoured by the infinite goodness and bounty of his Majesty. The Marshal lives in great splendour, and seems to me to be much esteemed and feared, which is necessary for the King's service in such times as the present. After all the obligations I owe you, Madam, I dare hope you will do me the favour to present my respects constantly to her Royal Highness the Duchess of Burgundy, and assure her that I am really most affectionately attached to her.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

St. Jean de Luz, July 10th, 1705.

MERCHANT who has arrived post from Madrid and who is going on to Paris in the same vessel has just brought me letters from the Queen and M. Amelot; I detain him that I may have the honour to inform you of my arrival here, and to express the great mortification I feel at not having received any token of remembrance from you during my journey. All is tranquil in Spain and the Catholic Majesties write in a very sprightly manner to me; they express their great satisfaction at the change which has taken place in their affairs; and M. Amelot, on his part, continues to

Madam, that is a country in which it is necessary to carry, as I may say, one's own fire and water. If I depart on Monday, as I expect, I shall arrive at Madrid on the 26th or the 27th of this month. I hear from every quarter that I shall be very well received. In order not to detain this courier any longer, I shall merely assure you of my infinite gratitude and of my most sincere and respectful attachment.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME

Saint Jean de Luz, July 14th, 1705.

THE letter you gave to Madame d'O. has not yet been delivered to me, Madam; but I have received that which you confided to the Marshal de Boufflers this morning. I return you my most grateful thanks for the regularity with which you have had the goodness to write to me, and I no longer complain of the fate which had left me so long in ignorance of it.

At length, Madam, I shall enter Spain to-morrow, not having been able sooner to collect all the articles which I shall require on such a painful journey as I have before me. It is actually a whole household that one is obliged to drag about,

which it is necessary to calculate on setting out twice a day. Anxious as I am to reach Madrid, I cannot arrive there before the 3rd of the month; the carriage sent to me by the king will not go more quickly, and it is not possible to arrange the day's journey so as to find accommodations for all my attendants. I expect tomorrow, it will be about nine o'clock in the evening when I shall have the honour to kiss the king and queen's hands, for I shall have to travel ten leagues on that day, although at this time of the year, there are fully seven hours of the day in which it is impossible to move, owing to the dread heat of the weather at present, especially in the neighbourhood of Madrid. I do not imagine anything will occur to cause an alteration in my plan; therefore, Madam, I shall be the more delighted at the pleasure which I am allowed to

amiable Princess. I cannot be too often assured of that which gives me such infinite pleasure, and which I really desire much more on account of her admirable qualities, than from any other motive. I have been charmed with the Duke of Burgundy on every occasion, when I have had the honour of addressing him. Nothing appears to me beyond his genius, and the commission with which he has charged you would be a sufficient eulogy for a Prince who had not already given, in numerous campaigns, brilliant testimonies of valour and wisdom.

I shall wait for my arrival at Madrid, to write to you, Madam, on the affairs of Spain. Generally speaking, I know that everything respecting the war, and the personal safety of their Majesties, is in good order. I yesterday saw the brother of Marshal Villars, who confirmed the accounts that a great change is observed since the arrival of M. Amelot and M. Orry at Madrid. It is a great matter that the torrent which was driving this monarchy towards a precipice, is impeded. You will see much greater events some months hence, for we have everything to hope from M. Amelot's line of conduct. His zeal in the King's service, not being intermingled with any private views, he will constantly praise their Catholic Majesties; the union which is so necessary will increase, instead of diminishing, and everything will prosper in the

of an Ambassador divested of passions,
enemy of low intrigues.

I was at Paris, the Nuncio in ordinary
speaking of the King of Spain's right
soliciting from his clergy some assistance
maintaining a war in which religion is so
interested. He appeared to me to ap-
prove it, and was even convinced that the
King would consent to such a measure, if the
affairs were to be properly managed. The be-
nefits which shall derive from this plan must make it
superior to all other considerations, and I intreat
Your Majesty to order such an important service to their
Majesties. The King of Spain has done
me the honour to inform me, that when the Mar-
quis of Leganez was arrested, he inquired of
me who opened the garden gate by which he
was taken, if it was I who had sent into Spain
in that kind office. Notwithstanding this
prejudice, I knew he had asked several
times of Pampeluna if I should go through it,

please their master. You may imagine, Madam, what are the consequences I expect from it.

I shall continue to write to you from every place I can, yet without any hope of receiving letters from you till I reach Madrid. I still request the favour of your being assured of my sincere attachment, and to honour me with your advice.

In short, Madam, you have so completely won the Queen's heart, that her Majesty never writes to me without expressing the pleasure she feels in having a friend of your great merit, and of frequently hearing from you.

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

Vitoria, July 21st, 1705.

I HAVE travelled six days, Madam, since my departure from St. Jean de Luz, in coming here. I repose to-day, being rather fatigued by the bad roads, which I found in a mountainous country, but I shall depart to-morrow morning very early, in order to reach Burgos in three days. I cannot express to you the joy which everbody has shewn wherever I have passed. In every village at which I have arrived on my journey, the inha-

bitants were under arms. I have prevented as much as possible, the placing of guards of honour at my door, but this has been almost out of my power, the governor of Guipuscoa having ordered the above mark of respect should be paid me wherever I slept. In short, Madam, there has been continual dancing under my windows, and fire-works, as if I were the Queen, or had brought peace to Spain. But that which gave me most pleasure, though I cannot mention it without pain, is, that of all those who complimented me in the name of the towns through which I have passed, there were none who did not say that heaven had granted my return, *à los deseos de toda la nacion y para el bien de todos.** I find again in the people, Madam, the same love for their Catholic Majesties : every one detests the late government ; yet to the Spanish Ministers alone is attributed the disorder which has prevailed in public affairs, and the greatest hopes are entertained that the King of Spain will soon be in a situation to go with a powerful army to retake what he has lost this year, and make great conquests from his enemies. It was full time, however, Madam to extinguish the fire which was kindled. The good began to be intimidated by the insolence of those who wish for changes, the latter became daily more bold, no longer fearing any punish

* To the wishes of the whole nation, and for the benefit of all

ment, and attributing to a secret understanding with the enemy, that which was solely the effects of the incapacity or the illusion of those who governed. In fact, Madam, it was the very eve of a general overthrow, and the Spanish nation, drawn on by mere fatality, was on the point of being lost, as I may say, with the best intentions in the world: this evil has now almost vanished. Catalonia alone disturbs me at present, for there are certainly many ill-intentioned persons there, and I fear the enemy's fleet will effect some considerable descent in it; the hatred which the Castilians have against that province is the reason that they do not show it more deference. It seems to me that instead of chastising those who merit it, they confound without distinction the good with the bad, which may engage both in taking the same side, though with very different intentions. It is one of the subjects on which I shall speak to M. Amelot, as soon as I reach Madrid. I have heard here of the almost sudden death of the Admiral of Castile. I am convinced, Madam, it will produce very good effects in Spain. I do not dare to explain myself further in a letter which I intend to send by the ordinary post, so that I shall conclude it, in assuring you of my eternal gratitude, and of all the attachment of which a heart wholly devoted to you is capable.

LETTER V.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, July 25th, 1705.

CALCULATED, Madam, on meeting the ordinary courier on my journey, and of giving this letter to him; but as I do not always travel on the post-road, I am sorry to say I have missed him.

I shall add that I arrived here yesterday evening in good health, though the weather is somewhat unportably hot, and that the courier of the

require me to be more at liberty than I feel myself to be at present. M. Amelot is really charmed with the King and Queen of Spain; he is acquainted with their real dispositions, and seems to me astonished that calumny could have been carried to such a height against those Princes, in whom he cannot perceive any cause for the reports against them. He will be much more contented with his embassy than at present, when Spain shall be well governed. Instead of being a burthen to France, as she has been until now, you will see her able, Madam, to conquer Portugal. You see already that the Marshal de Tessé proposes to his Catholic Majesty to take the command of his army in the month of September; he, who dreaded with so much reason, six weeks ago, being beaten at Badajoz. What will it be after the whole winter, for collecting an infinity of things which are wanting in the country, and without which it is clearly impossible to carry on the war? I think with him, that it is absolutely necessary that the King should, if possible, take the field, not for his safety, for there is no longer any question of this point, but for his glory, and for that of France, to which is attributed all that is now doing. This step alone can shew to the enemy how far they are from conquering us, and if they be not undeceived, it will at least invigorate the people to such a degree, Madam, that you will be astonished at

the results. It is absolutely necessary that M. Amelot should attend the King, and I am of opinion that the Queen ought to remain at Madrid. I do not think that the Ambassador is of a different opinion. Probably their Majesties will be loath to separate: this would be the only motive for inducing me to adopt a different course. I shall reach Madrid on the 3rd, as I have had the honour to inform you. The Queen wished it to be on the 2d, and that I should make in one day, with relays, the journey which requires three; but I am not adequate to it, and I have humbly intreated her Majesty to permit me to make only two days' journey in one. The Marquis de Torcy has also sent to me by the courier of M. de

LETTER VI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, August 5th, 1805. . .

It is as much as I can do, Madam, to find a moment's leisure, to inform you of my arrival in this city. I have been received with the greatest demonstrations of joy, both by the nobility and the people; but nothing can equal the kindness which their Majesties have done me the honour

to lavish on me, as they even took the trouble to come and meet me at two leagues from Madrid, where I had stopped to dine, and pass the most inconvenient part of the day. I found the King in very good health, and the Queen grown much since I left her; she is taller than myself; this is all that I shall have the honour of mentioning to-day, Madam, on a fine and ample subject. I suffered much from the heat on approaching Madrid. My cold, which has not yet left me, increased so much, that I had absolutely lost my voice; I did not recover it, excepting to address their Majesties. Yesterday evening I received your two letters of the 19th and 25th of July; that which you had given to Madame d'O. has not appeared: I mention it merely that you may perceive some are occasionally lost. I should require infinitely more time than I have to thank you, as I ought, for all the kindness you are pleased to show me. It cannot be greater; yet I assure you, Madam, I believe I deserve it, when I reflect on the regard, the respect, the attachment, and the love with which I shall through life be devoted to you.

I have already conferred with the Ambassador and Marshal de Tessé; both are equally zealous for the service of the two kings, and I hope that length the French will be seen in a foreign country, acting in concert together, without any other aim than that of each individual distinguish-

had the honour to tell her of the King's affection for the King, his grandson, and for herself, and of the friendship which I know the Duchess of Burgundy entertains for her Majesty. She orders me to request of you, on her part, to inform the Princess, her sister, that she will write to her after to-morrow by the courier, not having had time to do so to-day, owing to the haste with which the present is dispatched: from the same cause, the King will not receive any letters from the King of Spain; he refers to what M. Amelot reports respecting this country. The enemy is in sight of Barcelona, without giving us much uneasiness, because it is well supplied with all that is necessary for its defence, and the Viceroy will do his duty. The Ambassador and Orry do not lose a moment in the King's service at Madrid, nor the Marshal de Tessé with the army. In short, Madam, every thing goes on as it ought; it is true there is great difficulty in moving all this machine here, but nothing is left undone to put it in motion. It appears to me that affairs in Italy bear a good aspect. Heaven will assist us, Madam, and I hope that you and I will have the consolation of seeing the King enjoy in repose a long and glorious life. I shall have the honour of informing you of matters which I do not choose to confide to any but safe couriers: I would have availed myself of him who is about to depart, had I had time enough for it. I beg of you, Madam,

to take care of your health, if you have any regard for my peace of mind, and that I may not become quite useless in the service of their Catholic Majesties.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, August 28th, 1705.

Your letter of the 15th instant, Madam, relieves me from very great anxiety, by informing me that your fever has not had any bad consequences; the Queen was extremely concerned at it, having a real affection for you, and believing herself indebted to you for the tranquillity of mind she now enjoys. I cannot express to you, Madam, the satisfaction of her Majesty at seeing that the King now knows her for what she really is: she sometimes does me the honour to speak to me on this subject, in a manner that moves me even to tears. It is a miracle that she has been able to bear up against the grief she assures me she has felt during the time of her persecution. I have already informed you that those sufferings gave her a melancholy air, which she had not before. I have since perceived that her health is not so good; but this is a point which I reserve

for the first letter which I shall have the honour of writing to you by an extra courier.

We heard, two days ago, that the enemy's fleet had appeared before Barcelona. Since then, no post has arrived: this has given us some uneasiness; I still think, however, it is fortunate for Spain that the enemy has bent his principal forces towards that quarter: in going there they have lost that time which they might have employed much better elsewhere, and thus they have almost got into a season which hardly allows them to keep the sea with such a numerous fleet, and which has such a long passage to make to find any retreat.

Madame de Noirmoutier writes to me, Madam, of all the kindness with which you have honoured her; I return you a thousand most humble thanks for it, and never do I cease to declare that none has a heart formed like yours.

Prince Herclas de Tilly, Captain of the Guards for the time being, having taken his place behind the King of Spain, for the first time, at the chapter which is held on the day of Saint Louis, all the other grandees, excepting the Marquis of Castel Rodrigo, the young Count d'Aguilar, and the Duke d'Havré, retired. Those gentlemen are wrong, and his Catholic Majesty ought to display firmness on this occasion. The ambassador and I have agreed to defer this subject to the next post, because we wish to be in-

formed of the reasons which they pretend to have for feeling hurt at this new regulation. I wish you, Madam, perfect health; it is really necessary for my happiness.

I can readily perceive the goodness of Madame de Noailles in all the pains she has taken for Madame de Noirmoutier; I would have offered her my most humble thanks in a letter, but the heat is so intense I have not courage for it; could I take the liberty I would intreat of you to ask her to accept of my good intentions for the present. I am very desirous to enquire how the baths of Bourbon agree with the Duke de Noailles.

The Confessor of his Catholic Majesty, and I myself, have agreed on the line of conduct he is to adopt here.

LETTER IX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, August 29th, 1705.

I HAVE scarcely yet had time to collect my ideas, Madam. In order not to disoblige any one, I continue to give to those who express a wish to see me, all the time I can spare; and as

all think they have a right to importune me, there is no end to visitors. This letter will therefore be very brief, but it is I alone who will lose by it, for otherwise you are informed of all that occurs here: our union, thank God, cannot be more complete. M. Amelot is occupied in reprehending those who, from interested and personal views, have caused so much vexation to their Catholic Majesties. He is very well satisfied with Orry, and certainly his embassy no longer appears so difficult. The King, who is not afraid of being entrapped, is much more animated, and very attentive to his affairs. The Queen is above all the praises that I can bestow on her; you may judge of it, Madam, by the letters which she writes to you: I can assure you they are without disguise; and that the heart is more concerned in them than the head. I have already had the honour of informing you that her Majesty is taller than me: perhaps it may be owing to her having grown so much in a year, that she is not so stout as when I left her. I am also of opinion that what she suffered whilst endeavours were made to ruin her in the eyes of the King, her grandfather, and the misfortunes which the misconduct of her father had drawn on her house, may have been the cause of it; for, besides her headache, she is affected with a melancholy, which did not previously exist. I do every thing in my power to remove it, but that is very difficult in a country where there is neither amusements nor diversions.

M. de Tessé set out yesterday for the frontiers: he hopes, as I have mentioned to you, that we shall be able to defend ourselves this campaign. Arms and clothing having been deficient, a sufficient number of troops could not be assembled, for composing an army superior to that of our enemies: thus our young King will not leave Madrid. We expect every moment to hear of the appearance of the enemy's fleet on the coast of Catalonia. My hope is, that the Archduke may give into this enterprize, being well convinced that it will never succeed. Don Francisco de Velasco, who is not influenced by illusions, is quite of my opinion, and has promised us miracles if he be attacked. In conclusion, Madam, I wish to assure you that all is very tranquil, and that, provided false news should not misguide you in France, you will have no further cause of uncasiness respecting Spanish affairs. I do not mean to say there are no complaints: to complain is in the nature of the Spanish nation; but one should care but little for what a few individuals may say, who talk for talking sake, when results disprove all their arguments. I am yours, Madam, and nothing can equal the respectful gratitude with which I feel all your goodness.

P. S. I am very impatient for the departure of a Courier, that I may have the honour of writing to you about certain things that I cannot risk in sending otherwise. The Queen has had a violent head-ache to-day, yet she was desirous to write to

you, Madam; and I intreated her not to do so, for I know that you are too much interested in her health, to prefer it to the pleasure you would have in receiving her letters: I shall fill up mine a little more in future.

LETTER X.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 3d, 1705.

I BEGAN stating to you, in my last letter, Madam, the uneasiness which I felt for the Queen's health; herewith you have the opinions which I have taken on her complaint, by three French physicians who are here, and whom I have required to keep the greatest secrecy. You will, if you please, have the goodness to deliver them to M. Fagon, that he may direct us. I was also desirous to know the sentiments of their Majesties' surgeon, and even those of my own, who is a man of whom I have a very good opinion, and who has been recommended to me by the Marshal. I fear the Queen has allowed her disease to take too deep root; she never mentioned it to any one, believing it of no consequence, and it was only by the great attention I pay to her Majesty that I perceived it. The Marshal de

Tessé's physician does not deem it serious, saying that the glands are in no respect adhesive; the other two consider the disease as rather more considerable.

The ambassador this day informs his Majesty of the enterprise of the grandees against the captains of the guards; this business does not disturb us, because they are wrong, and the public think his Majesty has shown them too much lenity. The terror in which they are in seeing the authority they had usurped during the preceding reign diminished, has prevented them from reflecting on the false step they were going to take. They have seen that those guards, who, through their artifices, were starving, could not be destroyed, if those who commanded them were honoured and distinguished according to their posts; this has confounded them, and they have plunged, like blind men, into an undertaking which discovers their bad intentions, without being of any use to them. It is three or four of the greatest enemies to that establishment, who have excited the others. Several of the latter confess they have no motive, and clearly show by their language, what is the real object of this cabal. The ambassador is of opinion that no middle course can be taken in this business. I think with him, for the King of Spain cannot govern, unless he be in a situation to make himself respected by the grandees; and if he has no guards,

he will never succeed in this object. All establishments are difficult, Madam, in their commencement, but especially in this country, where no innovations are liked, because the system of government cannot be more contrary to the authority of the King, nor more advantageous for some of his subjects. This irregular situation is one of the causes of the decay of the monarchy, and most assuredly would insure its ruin, if not remedied. The affair is too far advanced to recede, therefore his Majesty may with safety confide the result of it to the prudence of his ambassador, who, considering the grandees of Spain as merely human beings, will have no other principle of action, than the just subordination which ought to exist between a King and his subjects.

Most cordially, Madam, do I congratulate you on the great victory which the King's armies have gained in Italy. It is one of those events that I always expect from heaven, and which Providence could not refuse to the justice which accompanies the cause of our masters. The Queen is quite delighted with it, from the hope she entertains that the Duke of Savoy will be forced, by this fortunate success, to implore the clemency of the King, her grandfather. The English and Dutch fleet have at length decided on what I most wished; you will see, Madam, that the results of this undertaking will be such as I had foreseen. Don Francisco de Velasco

informs us that the enemy have prepared to open the trenches. When I consider that ten thousand men, at the most, who have no other retreat than their ships, are going to commence the siege of Barcelona, on the 1st of September, I cannot avoid saying that God deprives those of reason whom he dooms to destruction.

I am still very impatient, Madam, to hear of your health; it disturbs me much more, I assure you, than the affairs of this country.

P. S.—Since writing my letter, the ambassador has, on his part, informed me, and I have had also information, that the grandees have sent their representations to France by a courier extraordinary. Nothing can so much prove our union, and the little hope that these gentry can have of dissolving it, than this step, which is certainly not to their taste; but, Madam, it would be very dangerous to open a door to their complaints, in matters which concern the authority of the King their master. There would be continual suits which would authorize their disobedience, and both here and in France, things would again fall into the same confusion in which they were at the time the French were wholly occupied in opposing each other. If those persons have written to the King or the Marquis de Torcy, his Majesty ought to have the goodness to send back their letters to his ambassador, that he may know what they say, and that no hope may be left them

of succeeding in their base intrigues to excite new dissensions.

The Dukes of Montalto, Medina-Cœli, and Medina Sidonia, are the chiefs of this cabal; all three deserve that the King their master should make them feel the effects of his indignation; but especially the first, who, on every occasion, gives proofs of his ill-will. The ambassador is of opinion, that his Catholic Majesty ought to deprive him of his place of president of the council of Arragon: this is my opinion also; and both of us think that this ought to be done without waiting for the replies of the court, in order that it may appear to be a resolution taken by the King of Spain, in which France has had no part.

Do not be alarmed, I intreat you, Madam, at these resolutions: it is fortunate that the grandees have given us such a fair opportunity to mortify them. They are full of pride, without strength or courage, and do nothing but endeavour to destroy the authority of their King. And I am also greatly enraged, for all they did when they were in power. I do not mean to say, however, that they are all equally bad, for some have been found among them, on this occasion, who have done their duty, and who loudly condemn the conduct of the others. A few have circulated the report that the Queen no longer entertains the same kindness for me; this is a new artifice, of which I cannot yet discover the

meaning; but nothing being more false, it gives me little uneasiness. I assure you our young King regains courage as his affairs improve, and he is very happy to see his authority begin to be re-established. I should never terminate this long letter, Madam, were I not to curtail the greater part of what I had to say to you.

LETTER XI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 11th, 1705.

I HAVE been greatly agitated during two hours this morning, Madam, from having heard it reported that you were dying. Though I saw no appearance of it, as I had heard from you by the last post in your own hand-writing, I could not restrain my alarms, for bad news flies, and is often heard sooner by the merchants than by the couriers who arrive weekly. Thank God, Madam, this report has proved false! you do me the honour to write to me, and you are preparing for the journey to Fontainebleau, where you even take a pleasure in sleeping in our bed, without changing its place, which does not often happen to you; had not your mind been stronger than your person, it would be a strange thing, Madam: but I have felt too

much the effects of your constant kindness, not to know how much the one is superior to the other. We have received very good news to-day from Barcelona: as the ambassador informs the court of it, I shall not give you the details. There is every reason to hope, from what Don Francisco de Velasco writes, that the Archduke will soon re-embark, and that the rebels of Catalonia, on the arrival of the troops which the King of Spain sends in that direction, will repent of the false step they have taken. Not a moment is lost here in adopting every measure which is supposed most efficacious for the service of his Catholic Majesty. I cannot conceive how M. Amelot and M. Orry undergo all they perform. The Marshal de Tessé is not more at rest where he is; and I can assure you that each, so far as concerns his station, neglects nothing that he ought to do. The perfect harmony that exists amongst us is a great advantage; I hope it will increase every day, and that at length those persons whose only aim is to disunite us, will perceive their machinations become useless. It is, however, certain that there are still seeds in Madrid which ought to be rooted out; I saw a proof of it only three days ago, which it seems necessary that I ought to state to you. A little Genoese, named Viganego, the agent and pensioner of M. M. d'Estrées and perhaps also of M. de Gramont, having constantly attended him when here,

and being a particular friend of Destrae, a confidential servant of the Duke; this said M. Viganego went to all the grandees of his acquaintance, reporting that the ambassador knew nothing whatever of what had passed in the affair of the grandees, as he had told him, and that he disapproved of it, as well as of many other things which the King of Spain was made to do; and that the Minister and myself did not act in concert; yet there was not a single step taken in the affair alluded to, nor any other on which we did not perfectly agree: thus it is mere malice on the part of this individual, in order that it may reach me from various quarters that the ambassador wishes to throw upon my shoulders that responsibility, which he shares in an equal degree, and which does not please these gentlemen, though they have no reason to complain of what their King has done on this occasion. One of those persons had the honesty to come and inform me of the reports which the Genoese circulated, to make enemies for me; and told me at the same time, that I might name him to M. Amelot, well knowing it was a malicious rumour, in order that we might be aware it is intended to cause a quarrel between us, by spreading false reports. When I first heard of it, I confided the whole to the ambassador; I proved to him that there was an old intrigue, which it was necessary to eradicate, and we agreed that I should request the King to

order Mr. Viganego to quit Spain. Had I adopted this plan on my arrival at Madrid against those I suspect, and with good cause, most assuredly I should have acted a wise part; but I can say with truth, that I naturally feel great repugnance in resolving on giving pain to any one. I felt a great deal on hearing all the slanders, which those who are envious of our friend the Marshal de Villeroi have uttered against him; will people at court never cease blaming men because they are unfortunate? The Flemings do more justice to that general: we have many of them here, who have received letters from their friends in Brussels filled with his praises; the Duke d'Havré has just been speaking to me of him with every sentiment of esteem, in the presence of old officers, who have seen him display all the qualities which ought to be praised in a general. This Duke d'Havré, Madam, appears to be a very worthy and amiable man; the Duchess de Rohan confided to me, before my departure from Paris, that she thought of marrying her daughter to him; his circumstances are not flourishing, and this is all in which he is deficient for making him a good match in every respect.

So poor Madame de Grignan is dead from the ignorance of a quack! She, who had so much genius, and who piqued herself on knowing medicine as well as she did the philosophy of Descartes, how could she have placed herself in such hands? What faults are committed by the most enlightened



you that I should like to ascertain this point. I give you, Madam, a thousand humble thanks for having had the goodness to recommend to me the Marquis de Brancas ; I shall endeavour not to be useless to him in whatever he may reasonably require ; I have heard nothing but the best reports of him.

The Queen has taken baths, which she finds agree with her ; her Majesty will continue her medicines, and I shall view this with more confidence, when we have the opinion of M. Fagon, whom I do not esteem less than you do, notwithstanding his repugnance to bark and bleeding.

The King has received letters from the Viceroy of Valencia, and from M. de Zeniga, who informs him that the latter has defeated five hundred rebels near Valencia, and that he has cleared the road for going to attack Denia, which it is supposed will not make any resistance, having for its defence only a few paltry militia, which the enemy threw into it on their march to Catalonia. When the cavalry, which his Catholic Majesty has sent in that direction, shall appear, it is to be hoped the rebels in the principality of Catalonia will repent of their rashness, and the Archduke be forced to re-embark. In short, Madam, all hopes are for us. I wish the Marshal de Villars would restrain the audacity of my Lord Marlborough. I am truly sorry for the Princess de Soubise, as you say,

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ould she die, she will be a great loss to her family, though she will not leave them badly settled. Madame de Ventadour never ceases to perform the duties of a good relative and good friend to me. Madam, I shall never fail in my duty to you.

LETTER XII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 24th, 1705.

I HAVE no news to give you, Madam, of the Queen's health, her complaint having neither increased nor diminished since I had the honour of last writing to you. Whilst waiting for M. Magon to give his opinion, the chief physician advises her Majesty to take some trifling medicines, to prepare for others more important, should they be deemed necessary. It is now nine or ten days since we have had news from Barcelona; the Rebels being masters of the country, occupy the Castles, and arrest all those who are not of their party. This business becomes very serious, yet we are by no means in a situation to send such a body of troops in that direction as the necessity of the case requires. The towns are faithful for

the present; but excepting Barcelona, which is pretty well provided with provisions, as we suppose, it is to be feared that famine will force the others to open their gates to the Archduke. Although it may be reasonably hoped, that the enemy's fleet will soon be forced to retire, and, consequently, that this expedition will fall to pieces of itself, I still cannot avoid wishing most ardently, Madám, that the King may be able to assist us in Roussillon. All the efforts which are made here do not enable us to provide arms and clothing, which must be brought from France; the time that it requires retards the new levies, and deprives us of every means of placing Arragon in a state of defence: the rebels in the meanwhile increase, and as they find nothing to resist them, they spread themselves everywhere, and the evil increases daily. Do not be amazed, Madam, that the ambassador and Orry have not warded off this blow since they have been here; they could not find a remedy for everything, and they have done more than could have been imagined, for, it is acknowledged every moment, that had it not been for them, the King of Spain would not now be on the throne. Had they arrived six weeks later, the evil would have been irreparable. I do not try to flatter them; it is the mere truth, and there is not a sensible man in this country who does not say the same. I would have had a thousand

things to say to you, Madam, on this subject, but the sudden departure of the courier prevents me.

I am still very uneasy about your health.

P.S. The Queen orders me to inform you, Madam, that she could not write to you, because the courier leaves this too suddenly.

Since writing the above, news has been received from Saragossa, which allows us to hope, that kingdom will not follow the example of Catalonia.

LETTER XIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 30th, 1705.

THE long attack of fever which the Queen has had, Madam, has not been succeeded by any other inconvenience; her health is now the same as it was when I had last the honour of writing to you, and we are waiting for the answer from M. Fagon to administer to her Majesty the medicines which we believe she requires.

We are still without any news from Barcelona, but we have some from Arragon which pleases us; that kingdom displays great fidelity. The city of Saragossa raised in two days a regiment which

marches to the frontiers. Several individuals are forming levies at their own expense, for the King, and the troops which have left this are to go directly to Lerida. There has been a report, for several days past, that the Prince of Darmstadt has been killed before Montjouy, which he imagined he could have taken by assault; this comes from a great many places, yet not one writes with sufficient confidence to induce a belief in its authenticity. It would be truly fortunate for us if the Archduke had lost, in the course of three months, both that prince and the admiral. The essential point is, Madam, that to-morrow will be for us the first day of October; that it is not possible for the enemy's fleet to remain longer on the coasts of Catalonia without incurring the risk of being lost; that we are going to have troops enough there to stop the progress of the rebels; and that we do not yet see anything to make us fear that the enemy will risk passing the winter in the province.

I apprehend, from what the Marquis de Torcy writes to me, that the affair of the grandees has appeared to you of much greater consequence than it really is. Do me the honour, I intreat you, Madam, to assure the King, on my word, that the ambassador is not a man who will plunge into embarrassments without indispensable necessity, and that it was in case of either taking those steps, or of renouncing the re-establishment of the King's authority, on which depends all the



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s of the affairs of this country. If M. Ametters have not removed the impressions which complaints of the grandees must have made, his Majesty may demand the fullest explanations of the Ambassador: those he will give must unquestionably satisfy; and in the interval you will see, Madam, that the affair will arrange itself, for the greater part of the grandees seek only a pretext for turning, and separating from those who are the authors of the mutiny, acknowledging commonly, that some individual discontent, without any reasonable motive, has been the sole cause of disobedience. I would consider as a very great misfortune, I assure you, Madam, if the King's Council, which sees things in a very different light than we do, should think it necessary to displace the Regiment of the Guards, in order to please those who feel themselves hurt by that establishment. No concession can be conceded on this occasion, which would not extremely lessen the reputation of the Ambassador, and for ever weaken the authority of the King of Spain.

Permit me, if you please, Madam, to consult you on a subject, which I imagine it will be well to mention to the King. This is a strange proposal; yet I would be very loath to say more, if I suppose you would not keep the secret; in the business in question, you will find his Majesty suppressing his usual clemency, and endeavouring to pursue rigorously the most severe rules

of justice. It is about M. de Flamarin, whose unfortunate history is known to you. He had come here, during my absence, to offer his services to the King of Spain : a long and unfortunate illness has reduced him to a most pitiable state, and he has no resource but to return to Italy, to seek a climate which agrees with him better than this ; but he wishes that his Catholic Majesty would honour him with the rank of Lieutenant General, without pay : do me the honour to tell me, I intreat of you, Madam, if this favour would displease the King, and if I can, without giving offence myself be of service to him on this occasion. You know, Madam, the reasons I have for interesting myself in what concerns him ; yet I will risk nothing until you shall have had the goodness to give me your advice, and inform me of your opinion. The letters by the present post are not yet arrived : this delay makes me impatient, because I shall remain longer without hearing of your health. My heart tells me a thousand things at this moment, Madam, which are so many proofs that no one is so much attached to you as I am.

P.S.—Letters are just received from Saragossa, which state that our troops could not arrive in time at Lerida, and that the rebels have taken possession of that town. Everything possible is doing, Madam, but it is still greatly to be wished that the King may be able to succour us on the side of Roussillon, in order to prevent the Archduke

from dividing his troops and advancing towards Arragon.

LETTER XIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 4th, 1705.

It is merely that I may not lose any opportunity of enquiring about your health, that I write to you now, Madam. The ambassador has determined to dispatch this courier somewhat suddenly, and I have to attend their Majestics to two churches, where they are going to-day from etiquette. There is nothing new in the Queen's state of health. If she were more sprightly, the arguments you produce in regard to her illness would console me much. I expect impatiently the reply of M. Fagon, who, being exactly informed by the opinions I have sent you, can surely give us good advice.

It would seem that Don Francisco de Velasco cannot find any means of transmitting his letters. It is known, however, by two monks who left Barcelona on the 18th of last month, that the loss of Montjoux has not diminished the courage of the besieged, and that the town is not in want of any thing for its defence; probably you may have later news. We have already more than three

men at Fraga, who, in order to act, wait the arrival of the Prince de Herclas, who is now at Saragossa. We are led to hope that a little army will retake Lerida with the tranquillity as we had lost it. If this should be the case, and Barcelona holds out, our affairs will assume a new aspect in that country; for the Prince de Herclas will not certainly divide his troops; the rebels, who are mostly without arms and discipline, will not stand before the Prince de Herclas.

M. de Bay has made such a successful march into Portugal, that Badajoz may be considered safe. It is evident that Providence aids our arms, and nothing is omitted here for taking advantage of the favours of Heaven.

I am very happy to hear of the manner in which

who are the cause of all the rebellions you witness! Nothing afflicts me more than to see the authority of the King of Spain so limited, as not to dare punish people who openly try to tear the crown from him, and who are but too justly accused of many other crimes. It is, however, that which happens every day, and what the court of Rome has found the means of establishing so absolutely, that it is not even permitted to be criticized. Pray continue your kindness to me, Madam, and be ever convinced of my inviolable attachment.

P. S. I take the liberty to address you a letter for the Marshal d'Harcourt, which I send him on his brother's marriage. I wished to have had the honour to write to Madame de Noailles on the death of the Prince de Bournonville, whom you had created Duke, Madam, and I think with justice, though you told us it was done without reflexion; but I have not time. I have too great a regard for the Duke de Noailles, not to join in your joy at his restored health. The King of Spain is very happy to hear it, for he has frequently done me the honour to tell me that he found him a very worthy man, and highly entertaining.

The situation of the Cardinal d'Estrées distresses me much; I do not know if he will think so; it is, however, very true. What delight, good God, Madam, would it not be for the Queen and me, if the Duchess of Burgundy were really preg-

nant! This great Princess improves very much on acquaintance; for, I assure you that what I have observed in her far surpasses all that I have heard said. Above all things, Madam, I conjure you to take care of your health.

LETTER XV.**TO THE SAME.****Madrid, October 14th, 1705.**

I HAVE read with great pleasure, Madam, the reply of M. Fagon to the opinions of the physicians which I had the honour of sending to you. I was already really provoked at the idea he had of the complaint in question, and I could not believe that the cause of it was so inveterate as our French faculty had fancied; still I am satisfied with the zeal of those gentlemen, who thus judged merely from the fear they apparently had of being mistaken in such an important case. The external remedies, recommended by M. Fagon, have been commenced. The Queen follows exactly the regimen he has prescribed for her. Her Majesty naturally eats very little, and never commits any excess: thus in that respect we have no fear of doing violence to her inclina-

tions : the remainder will be executed with the same precision. Would to God, Madam, that some able politician could give me as much confidence in the affairs of this country, as M. Fagon has tranquillized me in respect to the Queen's health! We find ourselves in a crisis equally violent as dangerous, that is to say, on the eve of a battle in Estremadura, against an enemy double our strength, and without knowing any thing certain of what passes in Barcelona; whilst revolt is almost general in Catalonia, and begins to infect the kingdom of Valencia and that of Arragon. No one is less fearful than I am, Madam; on the contrary, I hope the Marshal de Tessé will defeat the enemy, and the weather is such as not to allow me to doubt of the enemy's fleet being obliged to retire immediately. Yet when I reflect on the game we are playing, and how difficult it would be to retake Barcelona if it were in possession of the Archduke, it is impossible for me to refrain from representing to you, that I do not know if the siege of Turin, which has its difficulties, and which can be deferred to the opening of next campaign, is of as great consequence as it is to give us immediate assistance. The troops which the King might send to us, could winter in Catalonia, and would cost his Majesty nothing. If the Archduke were forced to retreat, it may be said that the enemy would not attempt to establish himself a second time in that province,

which ought to be disarmed : and it is no less certain that we should be in a situation, before the month of March, of perhaps reducing the Portuguese to beg a peace of us, or at least to think only of their defence. On the other hand, if the Duke de Vendome, reinforced with seven or eight thousand men, should succeed in making Prince Eugene repass the mountains, whilst M. de la Feuillade would oppose the Duke of Savoy with a corps of ten thousand men, who could prevent the blockade of Turin during the winter, and the besieging it in the spring, before the Germans had time to march into Italy? In this manner, Madam, I calculated that from four to five thousand men of the army of Piedmont, joined to the troops of Provence, and to a part of those which are in Languedoc, would form a corps sufficient for driving out the Archduke, punishing the Catalonians, and fixing for ever the authority of the King of Spain in that cursed province; the more so, as his Catholic Majesty could unite to it five or six thousand men of his own troops. I intreat you to pardon me for presuming to argue on a subject so much above my capacity; one must have all the zeal I have to risk such ideas, and most humbly do I request you to suppress the paragraph if it can give offence.

The King of Spain writes to you, Madam, for a benefice, which the brother of Laroche, his chief valet de chambre, desires to have. His Majesty

has not dared to ask it directly of the King, whom he fears to weary in seeking too many favours. As it is his own idea to address himself to you, I have been charmed, Madam, to behold you the object of his confidence. Laroche is a very worthy man, who serves the King well, who does not meddle with anything but his own duties, and of whom no Spaniard speaks ill.

The Queen's health reminds me to say, that there is only one surgeon here in whom we can confide; for the Spanish surgeons have neither experience nor reputation, except in bleeding, which it is said, they perform very well, and for which, nevertheless, I would not apply to them if I were in need of it. This French surgeon, who is the King's, may fail us, either from sickness, or because he will attend his Majesty if he should go in the spring to command his army in Portugal: thus, Madam, I find it is very necessary to have another for the Queen. I would wish to propose one recommended to me by M. Mareshal, because he appears to me a clever man, and I am well satisfied with him. However, as I am not sufficiently acquainted with him, and am cautious of placing such a servant with the Queen without the King's permission, I request you to reflect on what I have the honour to say to you on this subject; and if the King approves of my idea (which is to have a second surgeon,) to confer with his Majesty and M. Mareshal, in order to decide

I may fix on him who attends me, and
a very prudent young man.

Reading over my letter, I find I write to
with almost as much freedom as I would
to my own sister: I do not repent of it,
; but I intreat of you to believe that it is
reme affection with which I am guided to-
you that gives me this confidence.

delighted that your health is improving;
s necessary, Madam, that this vile quartan
ould quit you, to make my mind easy;
ly I love you most sincerely, and ever re-
you with admiration.

and unprovided with an infinity of things necessary for its defence; its loss would have led to that of a large province, which is the most faithful in Spain; and, above all, the Marshal de Tessé was not half so strong as the enemy. After such good fortune, I hope, Madam, we shall not be less successful in Catalonia, to which point will be immediately sent all the troops that can be withdrawn from other places.

The Queen is very well, with the exception of the complaint of which you are aware, and which certainly does not increase. The King has had a bad swelling in his jaw; his Majesty is cured of it, and as he is fortunate in everything, this disease, which is generally very painful, has produced no other inconvenience than that of preventing him from hunting during some days.

You delight me, Madam, by all you do me the honour to write to me of the kindness of the Duchess of Burgundy: the Queen feels it much. The fact is, these two great Princesses are incomparable. M. Amelot is never silent respecting the pleasure expressed by ours at raising the siege of Badajoz. Formerly it would have been said to be grimace, or, perhaps, there would have been malice enough to suppose she were sorry for it; but, at present, I have no fear that the ambassador is of a different opinion from me. Were we to live a hundred years together, you would have nothing to apprehend, Madam, but that we should

completely agree: I can assure you that our reciprocal satisfaction increases the more we know each other.

You know of course, that Monseigneur has done me the honour to send me his portrait, set with very fine jewels. Though I take the liberty to write to him, I entreat you, Madam, to express the delight I experience at receiving this mark of goodness with which he honours me. Everybody here has seen it, and this has done me as much honour as it has given me pleasure.

I am waiting, with great impatience, for the news by the next post, to be informed if what you have learned about Hungary and Transylvania be true. How fortunate that would be, Madam, and how anxiously I wish for it! I am more than ever devotedly yours.

LETTER XVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 26th, 1705.

You will learn, Madam, by the letters of our ambassador, the measures which are taken here for the relief of Barcelona, so that I shall have the honour merely to write to you about the

Queen's health, which has improved since she has made use of the gentle remedies recommended to us by M. Fagon. Her glands are rather diminishing; the swelling which gave me so much uneasiness is not now so visible, and I hope that the rest will be removed with a little patience.

We have heard to-day, by letters from Italy, that the siege of Turin is deferred: I am heartily glad of it, because I always considered it a most difficult undertaking, and that the above resolution may perhaps give to the King the means of sending troops to us, before the Archduke can establish himself in Catalonia. It is highly necessary, Madam; for if we can be successful in this instance, Spain will certainly no longer require the King's attention; and, on the contrary, if the enemy remains master of that province, such a dangerous diversion will occupy us during the whole winter, and will not permit us to attack Portugal in the spring, with such superiority as would force it to sue for peace. It may be said that the presence of the Prince de Herclas has stopped the progress of the rebellion; but if Barcelona be lost, it is much to be feared that with so few troops to defend such a great extent of country, all the provinces which compose the kingdom of Arragon will follow the example of Catalonia. In the midst of these mournful reflections, I am never weary of hoping that the enemy's fleet will soon be forced to quit our coasts. The weather, which

has been so favourable to them till now, has changed to-day; and should it continue, it will not be possible for the English and Dutch to think otherwise than of retiring, whatever may be the orders they have received.

There has been a Royal Chapter held to-day. The Dukes of Veraguas and Bejar, and the Count d'Aguilar, senior, were present, along with the other grandees who have already submitted to the orders of the King their master. By degrees the rest will come in, and this example of firmness in his Catholic Majesty will greatly contribute to re-establish his authority; but, Madam, that which gives us this advantage is the resolution made in France of not meddling with the affair.

I am a thousand times more than I can express, Madam, your most obedient humble servant.

P.S. You do not mention any thing further, Madam, of the Duchess of Burgundy being pregnant: could it have been a mistake, or are you really deceiving us, by keeping us some time in uncertainty, to inform us suddenly of such an agreeable event?

LETTER XVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 30th, 1705.

WE have lost Barcelona, Madam, without even knowing if the garrison had time to capitulate, or if the inhabitants have delivered it up to the enemy. The King of Spain is heartily sorry for this loss; but his forces do not allow him to do all that he wishes, and it is this which so distresses him. Now that the enemy's fleet can no longer threaten the coasts of Provencc, as it is asserted to have retired to its own ports, would it be equally impossible for the King to send some infantry, to assist us in forming an army which his Catholic Majesty might command in person? I believe we can muster eight thousand men in Arragon, without leaving the frontiers on the side of Portugal too defenceless; four thousand men more would render this corps superior to the Archduke's army; and my idea would be, that as soon as it could be combined, the King of Spain should himself go, either to reduce Catalonia to obedience, or to place it in such a state as to prevent the Archduke from deriving resources from it, of which he will be in need until the enemy's fleet can return.

If time be lost, Madam, the evil will be almost incurable, and for the present it is nothing if we hasten to make a powerful effort.

I no longer encourage you by my letters; the danger is now evident, and the opinion entertained in this country, that France cannot resist the force which will be brought against her next year, will complete our destruction. The most loyal lose their courage in this situation; our infantry, with the exception of two regiments of guards, is good for nothing, because the ambassador on arriving here, did not find even the skeletons of the regiments. The Marshal de Tessé will not separate his, and perhaps he is right. All this, Madam, alarms me for the future, and renders assistance from France absolutely necessary. I am really sorry to give you such bad news; would to God that, at the cost of my life, I could make your mind as tranquil as it is good!

We learn that the greater part of the soldiers of the garrison of Barcelona, have entered into the service of the enemy: this augments their force as much as it diminishes ours. The evil increases every moment, and, excepting Heaven, none but the King, Madam, can save us from the misfortunes which threaten us. The Marshal de Tessé, with the French troops, would now be much more necessary in Arragon than in Estremadura.

P.S.—It is a long time since I took the liberty, Madam, to advise the King of Spain to order the

Cardinal Porto Carrero to have public prayers in his diocese: his Majesty has done so, and it is now performing. In fact nothing can exceed the King and Queen's devotion.

LETTER XIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 6th, 1705.

I SEND you a copy of a letter, which I wrote yesterday to the Marquis de Torcy, in answer to one of his, just received. The elucidations it contains respecting the affairs of this country, which it is right you should know, not on my own account or M. Amelot's, but that the degree of dependence to be placed on this nation, which has never liked us, and which has only self-interest at heart, should be better known in France. I have said nothing but the truth, and my reasons should convince the most superficial, that a part will be always taken for the whole, so long as people imagine that a few changes, whether good or bad, and in which but few are interested, could overturn this monarchy. The ambassador in the midst of his anxiety, has the satisfaction at least of seeing, that up to this time,

persons he has put into office, zealously fulfil
shes, and I could say the same thing on my
of during my absence, giants had not been
of certain pigmies, who were only fit for the
ons I had procured them. You will see by
me letter, that the King of Spain intends to
for Marshal de Tessé, to proceed to Arragon,
having secured as much as possible the frontiers
rtugal. I think the French troops will find
elves much better off in this country and Cata-
than in Estremadura, and I also think that
is no other means of securing Castile and
ing our misfortunes. We have some letters
assure us, that the enemy is in want of
things, of which money is one; and it is
ed, that they have already seized upon the

LETTER XX.

TO THE MARQUIS DE TORCY.

Madrid, November 6th, 1705.

SIR,

THE misfortunes which threaten us, are still greater than you suppose in your letter sent to me by the return of M. Amelot's courier. The succours from France not arriving, to put a stop to a flaming rebellion, everything is to be apprehended; and we have only one course to adopt, which I will explain to you, after answering some passages of your letter requiring an explanation. You say that you would have almost rather given anything than that changes should have taken place, and that cause for this discontent should have been given to persons of every description. You add, that it does not yet appear that the grandees are embarrassed about the course they have adopted, nor more disposed to submit to the will of the King, their master. Making use of that common freedom, which we have mutually agreed upon, I ask you, what are the changes that you intimate?

I have only witnessed three since my acquaintance with Spanish affairs; the first of which was

when the cardinals retired from office; the second respects the embassy of M. de Gramont; and the third relates to what has taken place since the arrival of M. Amelot. Certainly it is not the first that causes you uneasiness, since you cannot have forgotten the complaints that were made at the time against the government; and you must also remember, that we are nearly in the same state in which we were in the month of October 1703; and that it was Orry who enabled the King of Spain to make the first glorious campaign in Portugal.

If it be the embassy of the Duke de Gramont that you mean, I am of your opinion; for our present misfortunes are the unhappy results of all the faults which were committed at that time, although I do not impute them to the ambassador, who apparently intended well. He placed his confidence in those whom he thought most attached to France; and pardon me if I tell you, that it has never been rightly understood what sort of dependence there was to be placed upon the Spaniards.

It is an indisputable truth, that this nation gave itself up to a French Prince, only from the fear of not being sufficiently assisted by the emperor: the league was disunited at the time; France had powerful armies upon the frontiers of Spain, and the house of Austria appeared abandoned by its allies, who required a division of this monarchy.

Such, undoubtedly, were the reasons assigned to Charles II. by those who advised him to make a will in favour of the Duke of Anjou. The reception of Philip V. was then very cordial, and no discontent appeared, so long as the existing situation of things continued; but when the greatest part of Europe had declared itself in favour of the Archduke, the French were no longer in safety at Madrid. M. de Blecourt will confirm this fact, since he was here; and I have several letters from Cardinal de Porto Carrero, at Barcelona, which prove my assertions. The defection of the Duke of Savoy, and the war with Portugal, affected the public mind still more, but what completely alienated it, was the unfortunate day of Hochstet, which was considered in this country as a fatal blow to France. From that time the grandees, forgetting the favours and generosity of the King, our master, thought they could prevent the division of the monarchy only by taking part with the allies, which appeared to them the strongest side. The people, on the other hand, wearied with the loss of commerce, having an habitual antipathy to our nation, and seduced by a swarm of spies, who visited with impunity all the provinces, imagined, that if they were under the dominion of the Archduke, they could sell their wools, which constitute the riches of Spain, to the English and Dutch, and that their galleons would arrive in safety from the Indies, from which they conceive that the French

at present derive all their profit. Such are the ideas, and the opinions entertained that France is at the last extremity, which have thrown all classes into that lethargy you witness, even among those who testify the greatest fidelity. Any other pretexts are merely ostensible, to conceal what I announce to you; and it is only the more easily to change their sovereign, without being accused of infidelity, that the councils destroyed last year all the corps, by such cruel usage, that no one could be found any longer to enlist into the infantry. If the Duke de Gramont is to be reproached with anything, it is for his not having discovered this system of iniquity, and to have laboured, like others, to bring the King of Spain's affairs into the same state in which M. Amelot found them. I pass over the changes which this new ambassador made, since they took place whilst I was travelling, and which you may suppose my interest will not incline me to approve. However, I will say, without entering into any particulars, for which I have not time, that there is scarcely one of the changes in question, which has not conduced to ward off the ruin of this monarchy. Some have restored in a degree the King's authority, which was entirely lost; others have furnished the means of collecting together some troops; and there is not one that has the least connexion with the revolt of the Catalonians, or the disaffection of the inhabitants of Valencia and Arragon. These provinces

experience the mildest government in Spain, paying nothing to the King, and I do not know of the least infringement upon their privileges. We see also, that except some wretched persons, who seek to better their fortunes under a new master, it is only the mob who, to the present time, have taken up arms in favour of the Archduke. They would have done the same three years ago, had they found the enemy able to protect them, but I cannot say whether through hatred to the French or Spaniards. It is true you may reply to me, that it is not certain whether the Castilians are more faithful; but I have told you the reason of it, to which I have nothing to add, except that it depends upon the forces that we can oppose to the Archduke.

As to matters between the grandees and the captain of the guards, all that we see would justify a farther exercise of his authority. The present conjuncture is unfavourable to reducing these gentlemen to their allegiance; however, you know that there are some who daily return to their duty, and I may assure you that this matter would soon have an end, had we a little success. This long discussion does not remedy our evils, and I only see one way of averting still greater misfortunes which threaten us. The Archduke may be before a month hence in Arragon, with twenty thousand men. We must not calculate upon the country defending itself, and the King of Spain

leave garrisons, in open towns, without the loss of his best troops. With seven thousand men, it would be impossible to oppose so superior an enemy. The least ill success might alarm the people of Madrid, and the royal majesties, finding no safety in this city, might be obliged perhaps to take a shameful flight, which would decide the fate of Spain.

In this situation of things, it appears to me that the King should send Marshal de Tessé as soon as possible into this quarter, with all the troops under his command, and confide the defence of the frontiers of Portugal to a part of the Spanish troops, who probably will not so cowardly surrender to the Portuguese as they do the Archduke. They, would prevent the French from penetrating into the country during

which I shall mention to the ambassador. God grant that he may discover more prompt and efficacious means of saving this monarchy! I cannot suggest others, and I think they are the only ones, since we cannot expect any diversion on the side of France till the month of April.

I am, Sir, one of your most sincere friends, and honour you more than any one else.

P. S. The King of Spain entertains the same opinion that I do, upon the necessity of sending for the Marshal de Tessé here, with all the French troops. He mentioned it in my presence to the ambassador; therefore I shall take no part in the decision which will be made upon this subject, but that which becomes me, which is, to think and let others act.

LETTER. XXI.

TO MADAME DE MAINTENON.

Madrid, November 8th, 1705.

COUNT D'AGUILAR merits by his birth, intelligence, services, and attachment to the King of Spain's person, to whom he has the honour of being captain of the guards, being well received

in France. He goes there by the orders of his master, and to satisfy those who are well disposed to represent our situation, and to concert measures with our ministers for the amelioration of our affairs. M. Amelot is so well satisfied with Count d'Aguilar, his father, who is the actual president of the council of Arragon, that I thought it right to procure for the latter the honour of an interview with you, by giving him this letter, which he will endeavour to deliver to you in person. He is one of the best informed men in this country, and I am persuaded that the King will be well satisfied with all that he will have to say to him. I envy the good fortune which takes him to France, and brings him near you, notwithstanding which I should be very sorry not to be near the Queen in so embarrassing a conjuncture as this. Our King ardently wishes to look after the Archduke, and has written to Marshal de Tessé to bring up his troops as soon as possible. If whilst on his march some reinforcements could be sent us, by way of Navarre, they would make this corps complete, and enable us to act more upon the offensive. For heaven's sake, let them take care in France to preserve Yaca! It is a most important post, and in want of everything, according to Spanish custom.

LETTER XXII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 4th, 1705.

I TAKE fresh courage, Madam, as our troops advance towards Catalonia, and they have nearly all passed through the suburbs of this city, in view of their Majesties and many other persons, who had the same curiosity. The revolt is at an end in Arragon; the kingdom of Valencia is also more tranquil, and our cavalry upon the frontiers always gain some advantages over the miquelots, although they are every where superior in numbers. The resolution of the King of Spain to go and attack the Archduke, as soon as possible, is the only thing which can save Spain; and since it became generally known, a total change has taken place in the aspect of affairs. You will ultimately see that Catalonia will return to its allegiance, with as much readiness as it departed from it; and if the King can assist us, by land and sea, at the same time that his Catholic Majesty approaches Barcelona, the enemy will certainly be more embarrassed than ourselves. I have not the presumption to tell you all that I expect from this enterprise; but I flatter myself

that the siege of Nice will be finished soon enough for the troops and ships employed in it, to come over to Catalonia in the month of January. I imagine, that the Archduke's resources will entirely fail him, when the King of Spain shall have become master of the rest of the province; and I cannot conceive that the English and Dutch will be able to furnish him, during the winter, with all the assistance he will require. In that case, everything appears possible to me, and my imagination has no bounds.

Estremadura will not be abandoned; all the Spanish troops will be in that quarter, and efforts are making to render them complete; in case of success, they will form a pretty considerable army, to prevent the Portuguese from attempting any siege, or entering Spain, when the English are obliged to send all their forces into Catalonia, for the safety of the Archduke. But it is requisite that M. de Chamillard should urge Orry on a point of honour, by calling upon him to fulfil his promise, of having forty battalions and fifty squadrons, well armed and clothed, in the pay of the King of Spain, besides his household troops, which will serve in Catalonia with the French. I am always well satisfied with his zeal and assiduity, nevertheless the minister's orders, given in a certain form, will do no harm, and are even necessary for a more perfect union among the French who transact this *portion of the concerns of our two Kings here.*

It would be desirable, Madam, for the ambassador and myself, that every one thought as correctly as you do with respect to what is passing in this country, as I should then not be obliged to give explanations which are very foreign to the object in question, and which have been occasioned only by the inclinations which my enemies feel of giving fresh credit to the falsehoods which have been formerly advanced. I am, nevertheless, very much obliged to the Marquis de Torcy, who has volunteered acknowledging the fact, about which I wrote to you the last post, in order to undeceive the Duke of Alba.

We are very much embarrassed respecting the form which the government should assume during the King's absence. The Queen would not wish to take any charge upon herself, and I fully agree with her in opinion; however, it does not appear possible to avoid it. The best plan, it seems to me, is for the ambassador to remain here, near her, with those, who actually compose the cabinet, and for the King of Spain to have an eye only to the affairs of Catalonia, which he will decide upon with Marshal de Tessé. Every other expedient has its inconveniences: the latter will cause no change, and will cherish hope in all those who aspire to the honour of labouring with the King, and who are convinced that the administration cannot continue as it is.

You write to me, Madam, in such a way as to

e think that the conduct of the Queen is not approved in France; nothing has transpired, that I know, up to the time against her, and the ambassador no more than myself; I, therefore, take liberty of telling you, that they are perhaps the reports, which should not give you any. You much afflict me by informing me of the sickness of Burgundy's bad health: God preserve the King and yours, which is certainly more to me than my own.

LETTER XXIII.

scolds us all, numerous as we are, that nothing may be neglected; but he does what we desire, and that is enough for us. Has he not complained to you of our idea of retaking Barcelona this winter? He does not want reasons to prove that the idea is chimerical, but it is all in vain: if he had not to furnish troops and ammunition, he would acknowledge that nothing can be easier than to finish the war, by making the Archduke prisoner, with all the English remaining in Catalonia. Their Majesties are transported with joy, at the succours which the King promises them, and which I did not think would be so considerable; but nothing is impossible to his Majesty, when he consults his paternal heart. We are just come from a convent, where the Queen has passed the day, in conformity to the usual etiquette, which is the reason that I have scarcely time to assure you of my inviolable attachment.

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 23d, 1705.

I ANSWER two of your letters, Madam, dated the 29th ultimo, and the 6th instant. The former afforded me great pleasure by the information, that your health was much better than it had

been for a long time ; but the latter grieves me, because you say that you have the fever ; and it would appear that you are not sufficiently confiding for me to merit by my conduct, as much as by my attachment, your esteem and friendship. This last passage is of such importance, that it will be the only one for the subject of this letter, for I confess to you, that this alone troubles me more than all the rest, and that, if you were incapable of doing me all the justice which I expect from your correct mind, and my entire devotedness to the service of the two Kings, I could not continue to live here, but as a prey to chagrin, which would soon render me useless. Keep this letter, I entreat you, to yourself.

It has been mentioned to you, that many ladies of the court write me an account of everything that happens, in order to ingratiate themselves in my favour, than which there is nothing more untrue. Since my departure from Paris, Madame de Noailles, de Beauvilliers, and the Duchess de Lude, have each written to me two or three times, but I do not think your suspicions fall upon them. I have received two letters from the Princess d'Epinoy, respecting affairs which solely regard the Prince de Vaudemont, or her own concerns in Flanders. The Duchesses d'Harcourt and de Ventadour have also written to me once, and the Countess de Beuvron two or three times ; but all are either letters of friendship or

complimentary, and without containing any news. The men write to me still less, but I except the ministers and M. le Prince, who has done me the honour of recommending his affairs to me, and of thanking me five or six times. I do not remember indeed receiving any other letters, than two from the nuncio, two or three from the Marshal de Villeroy, one from Marshal de Boufflers, and another from the Duke d'Harcourt, in answer to one of condolence which I sent him on the death of his brother. I forgot that the Duke de Gramont had also written to me twice. Judge, then, from these particulars, which I affirm to be correct, if I can be reproached for a correspondence with people who seek for broils, and with being too credulous. I have so little of this defect, that I might with more reason be accused of believing nothing, and it might be said that the too great confidence I have in my rectitude, prevents me from paying attention to many things, which I ought not to despise, having such dangerous enemies to contend with in France.

They were not Frenchmen who informed me, of what the Duke and Duchess of Alba imputed to me, but Spanish grandees, who received an account of it by letters, and who were already very much alarmed at the consequences they deduced from the letter, which it was supposed I had written. They had not the least intention to gratify me, their interest alone inducing them to speak out, and from their disposition this affair would have

made more noise than the *Banquillo*, if I
t taken it as I have done.

r assuring you that nobody writes to me,
about what concerns myself, allow me to
ou, that it is in France people attach too
faith to those, who only seek to embroil.
fine instance of it, M. de Chamillard, a
t and unprejudiced man, and whom I thought
place his chief confidence in M. Amelot,
erits it better than any one for his probity,
to me the following passage in his last

a God's name, Madam, endeavour to obtain
confidence in the generals whom the King
to Spain! They are made to serve like
ps of infantry. M. de Tessé is so prudent
ay nothing of it; but I complain to you on

moreover those of Spain, commanding even the captains general, his seniors, against the custom of the country. We live together very well satisfied with each other, and upon so friendly a footing, that I could not conceal my astonishment from him, at his having given M. de Chamillard cause, either by his conversation or letters, to believe a circumstance so remote from the truth. He assured me that he had not the slightest cause for complaining, spoke to me with the greatest affability, and on returning home wrote me the enclosed letter. If he has written only what he points out to me, of which I have no doubt, M. de Chamillard certainly ought not to have concluded, that he serves here as an infantry captain, nor exhort me to procure him more confidence. I suppose, therefore, that other people write with the intention of embroiling us all, and that there is a greater disposition in France to believe false reports than the truth. These mischievous spirits are no strangers to me ; I was told at Versailles that they were suffered to remain here, because they were necessary for certain purposes ; but I was given to understand, at the same time, that no credit would be given to their communications. I do not say all that I could upon this subject, but if you knew every thing that is written upon these false principles, you would own that the ambassador, still more

than myself, ought not to be very well satisfied with the little justice which is rendered to his zeal, uprightness, and ability.

What has just occurred at Valencia, is a striking proof that the time was too valuable to lose ten or twelve days in consulting Marshal de Tessé, upon the passage of troops from France into Arragon. Would to God that this determination had taken place eight days sooner! we should not be in these additional embarrassments, and those even who were of a different opinion are now obliged to own it. These people, instead of poisoning the most healthy things, would have done much better in preventing our French soldiers from committing so many excesses on the road; for it was their business, and the care which had been taken to provide provisions in abundance on the line of march deserved, as much as the service of the two Kings, this attention from them.

This letter is too long already for me to add anything more; besides, you will see in M. Amelot's despatch all that is new here. What I require of you, Madam, is, that they may believe literally in France all that you know I have written to M. de Torcy, upon the disposition of nearly all the Spaniards. As to the honour of your friendship, you will never have sufficient cause to deprive me of it, as you owe it me, for my attachment to you, my zeal for the King's service, and

moreover my perseverance in continuing to despise all that my enemies are capable of inventing against me.

P.S. The Queen's swellings are become a little larger, and more of them have made their appearance within the last few days. Our physicians have had a consultation, in which they were agreed as to the regimen and remedies to be adopted; they are not at all alarmed, but, on the contrary, are very sanguine as to their hopes of curing her this spring.

I cannot conceive anything more dismal than the situation of M. and Madame de Beauvilliers, to whom I have testified my very sincere sympathy. Their Majesties have had the goodness to write to them. You would have had a letter from the Queen, had she not been the greater part of the day at church. I cannot conclude, Madam, without pitying you at having lost poor Mademoiselle Nanon.

LETTER XXV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 6th, 1706.

If you refused me the honour of writing to you, you would certainly deprive me of the only pleasure I have in this country, next to that of receiving

your letters. So long as you approve it, rather than fail I will intrude upon the hours of rest to fulfil this pleasing duty, for I am never so much at my ease as when I unbosom myself to you on the causes of my troubles. You are right in saying, that it would be desirable for M. Amelot to be everywhere. The King will never have so zealous an ambassador, so assiduous in business, nor so acceptable to the Spaniards. Other more powerful reasons than those which give you uneasiness, would have made me wish that he had accompanied our young King into Catalonia; but it is risking everything to leave the Queen alone with the Spaniards at such a particular crisis. I dare not further explain myself in a letter which may be lost. The fear entertained in France lest it should not appear to the public, that the Queen is invested with full powers, when the ambassador remains near her person, is grounded upon the error, that this opinion has been already entertained in Spain. I assure you, however, that the Spaniards have never made any such remark, and that it is only mischievous Frenchmen who are capable of inventing and publishing this false supposition. All the councils remaining at Madrid, and the distance from Portugal and Barcelona not allowing any communication with the King upon every emergency, if the Queen were not here, it would be absolutely necessary to establish a governor, or to appoint a junta; therefore there cannot be the

least objection as to her Majesty remaining at the head of affairs, in which case, it does not appear to me, that there can be any to the ambassador continuing near her person, to assist her with his councils, at a time when revolt is as much to be apprehended in Castile as in the other provinces, from the boldness with which the monks preach everywhere in favour of the house of Austria; but, as I may be deceived, would it not be possible to make Marshal de Tessé ambassador extraordinary during the King's absence? Whatever inconvenience might attend this project, it can be nothing comparable to the risk of leaving the Queen here without M. Amelot. You would think as I do, Madam, were you in my place, and I should hope to convince you that I am in the right, were I at liberty to explain myself fully.

You speak highly of the Duke of Alba, and the Marquis de Torcy recommends him strongly to me. This is not necessary, for I protest to you that it is only the service of the two Kings which makes me act, and that no motive shall ever prevent me from procuring, to the utmost of my ability, rewards for a man, whom I know to be so faithful to his master and so agreeable to ours.

I send you the decree of his Majesty, ordering public prayers, and I thought it proper to get it printed, in order to satisfy the curiosity of a great number of people who asked for copies.

I return you many very humble thanks for your

anxiety respecting my bad eye. I hardly dare write myself, for fear of weakening it still more.

I omit noticing the affairs of this country, since you become acquainted with everything that is passing here by means of M. Amelot's dispatches. Nothing more then remains, than to assure you of my faithful attachment.

LETTER XXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 20th, 1706.

COUNT D'AGUILAR has arrived here, fully sensible of the King's goodness and yours. It would be desirable that such good subjects as he is, should act the part, as it were, of missionaries, by travelling from Spain into France, which would be very beneficial to us in extirpating the false ideas which deceive that nation, and render it so little mindful of its own interests. The King and Queen are continually asking questions of him. He gratifies their curiosity in every respect, and particularly as to the affection which he noticed the King possessed for their Majesties, as well as to the real interest which you take in their happi-

ness. I can easily conceive that his alacrity will not have suited every one's taste; but could you not wish that all the Spaniards possessed as much in the service of their master; and are you not entirely at ease respecting old Count d'Aguilar, who has always been attempted to be passed off as one of the Austrian party, when you find so much zeal and sincerity in his only son? The father discharges his duty, as president of Arragon, as satisfactorily as the ambassador could wish, and it may be said with general approbation.

If the Duke de Noailles is your nephew, he is likewise mine, according to the custom of Brittany. Whatever reasons, nevertheless, I may have to interest myself in his favour, I shall scarcely be able to show him any if he continues in Catalonia; but I will, at all events, tell their Majesties what you have not presumed to write to them.

You perfectly recollect that you did me the honour of recommending the Marquis de Brancas, whom I have seen here, and who appeared deserving of your protection. His intention is to serve the King of Spain, therefore do me the honour of writing me, to say whether the King approves of my serving him in that respect, and to what lengths I may go in being useful to him. Inclosed is the copy of a letter received from him explanatory of his views. Our affairs do not grow worse, but, on the contrary, it would appear that we are upon the eve of receiving good news from Valen-

cia. The insurgents, in great numbers, had as it were, besieged Alicant, but some gentlemen, attached to the King, drove away the mob, with troops which they had assembled at their own expense. Two bishops also put themselves at the head of the militia of Murcia, to succour the same place. There are near five thousand men, whose services will be useful in reducing Valencia, and who have been raised by the praiseworthy efforts and unexampled zeal of these good prelates.

I beg you to offer my very humble thanks to the King, for the gracious things which Count d'Aguilar has communicated to me from him, and for the protection with which his Majesty continues to honour my brothers. My respect prevents me from taking that liberty myself, being besides convinced, that, depending upon your goodness, which you allow me to do, I cannot adopt a wiser course than that of placing my dearest interests in your hands. How happy I am to have a friend like you! But how painful to reflect, that she is recovering from an attack of fever, which lasted twenty-four hours, and which alarmed M. Fagon.

P. S. The King of Spain has again done me the honour of telling me this evening, that he would be very glad to see the Duke de Noailles once more; and the Queen said, that possessing so many amiable and estimable qualities as your nephew does, she wishes to make a staunch friend

of him, which I certainly shall not oppose. You inform me of many very extraordinary marriages. I should be in great pain for Madame de Caylus, had we not received letters from Paris which make no mention of her, and which are of a later date than the one you have wrote me mentioning her complaint. It would be indeed a great pity if any misfortune happened to one of the most charming women in the world. Tell me, I beseech you, Madam, whether you do not heartily love her? Count de Caylus, her brother-in-law, is here, a very civil, prudent, and polite young man.

LETTER XXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, February 3rd, 1706.

I HAVE received no letters from you this post, and have learned from the public papers, that you had the fever at the departure of the courier. Nothing can grieve me more than to hear of your indisposition, and the Queen is not less so than myself, speaking of it with the same anxiety as I might be expected to do, being her above all

who is under greater obligations to you
any one else upon earth.

Not displeas'd, I entreat you, Madam, if I
a little inquietude respecting certain things
are unopportunately laid to my charge. If I
ged the duties of my situation under the
eyes or yours I should fear nothing, but I
ortunately three hundred leagues from you,
ings which take place here are very often
misrepresented when they reach you. All
u tell me, as to the King's approval of my
s, affords me great pleasure. Would to God
knew how to act better, to testify to his
y that all my thoughts have no other object
merit his approbation! I must satisfy your
to learn that the King of Spain is at the
his army. I am however myself so much

canton his troops on both sides of the Ebro, whilst he gave orders respecting provisions, and collected together what was necessary for a more important expedition. Such is the answer I received, when I have asked the same question as you have put to me: it is for the King to decide upon the soundness of this reasoning; but you must of course think that the King of Spain ardently wishes to depart, and that the Queen is not less anxious than him, from losing apparently more than a month's time since the French troops arrived in Arragon.

Allow me to ask you how Madame de Caylus has recovered from her attack? The Queen follows precisely the regimen prescribed by M. Fagon, and her health continues the same. The bad weather has prevented the arrival of the couriers, for the last two or three days, which considerably increases the uneasiness I feel on your account.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 4th, 1706.

THE aspect of affairs in this country is about to undergo so great a change, from the fresh

stance which the King has the goodness to
us, that it appears to me we have nothing
to fear, whatever efforts the enemy may
e to support the Archduke in Catalonia,
attack our frontiers on the side of Portugal.
can form no idea of the joy this has caused
l the well disposed, and how much the parti-
of the house of Austria are dispirited. It
ue that the French troops will arrive rather
but if the Duke de Berwick cannot prevent
Portuguese from attacking us, he will at least
ble to harass them and dispute the ground,
the troops which he will now have. You
heard of the departure of the King of Spain
Valencia, whose conquest he deemed neces-
and so easy as not to interfere with the

LETTER XXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 17th, 1706.

Now that it appears to me you are a little better, I resume courage respecting my own affairs, and flatter myself that all will go on well. The King is to make his entry into Catalonia this day, with Marshal de Tessé, and he may reach Barcelona in a week or ten days, but M. de Legal may be there sooner. The Archduke has but few troops in the fortress, and a little good fortune by sea would cause a favourable change.

The Duke de Noailles informs their Majesties of his proceedings, with an exactness which shows his good conduct, as much as the success with which he has been attended to the present time; his letters are sensible, prudent, and full of good advice.

We have as yet no idea that Peterborough thinks of quitting Valencia, and I am persuaded that it is his intention to wait there for succours from England, and to carry the war into this quarter, because it will be more injurious to us and advantageous to him; but I do not comprehend

what he means to do with the Archduke, whose person is doubtless already much in danger.

Marshal de Berwick has been here some days. Fortunately the Portuguese give us more time than we expected for our arrangements in Estremadura, inasmuch as they defer taking the field, which will certainly enable M. de Berwick to wait, without danger, till the succours arrive from France. We are very much obliged to you for having sent him, as he will not interrupt the union, which, thank God, continues between the French here, and he will be very useful to the two Kings, from the friendship and esteem in which he is held by the whole Spanish nation; he is on the point of setting out.

The Queen daily obtains more admiration in the *Despacho*,* at which the ambassador is delighted, and I am still more so than he to see her Majesty's impatience when the King's courier does not arrive at the usual time, and the real joy to be witnessed in her as soon as she has received her letters. I could wish to be with you, Madam, to show you all those which their Majesties write to each other, and which breathe a mutual affection, while they evince their good sense, and contain sentiments full of piety and virtue; all which would give you the most heartfelt satisfaction.

* In Spain, this term applies more particularly to the diplomatic relations and correspondence of the court.—ED.

The Queen highly approves of your regulations at Saint Cyr, and as our ladies also wish to have them, I am getting them translated into Spanish for their gratification. Was not her Majesty under very different engagements from those of the ladies of Saint Cyr, I verily believe that she would wish to be one of your pupils.

Prayers continue to be said in all the churches of Madrid, for the success of his Majesty's arms, and they are attended by a great crowd of people and nobility; the Queen also attends whenever she can. Her health is good, thank God, notwithstanding all her anxieties, but her swellings have rather increased than diminished during this winter, although she exactly follows the regimen of M. Fagon. I feel thankful to this able physician, for alleviating the Queen of England's complaint, since that virtuous Princess cannot live too long for the honour of our sex; I say the same with respect to yourself, and as I could wish you to live longer than myself, I cannot help recommending to you the use of coffee, although I am sure to offend M. Fagon. Being convinced that most of our complaints proceed from indigestion, I know from experience there is no better remedy than coffee, and since I have used it my health has been much better, for I keep Lent without inconvenience, although in a country where everything is scarce, and I could not formerly eat on a fast day without being much incommoded.

We have just received letters from M. de Legal to Marshal de Tessé, informing us that a great number of supplies are wanted for the siege of Barcelona, which will doubtless retard the King of Spain's march, and grieve him much more, especially on seeing that he would have had time enough to accomplish this object in Valencia, the failure of which may ultimately give us considerable uneasiness. It is impossible to be more devoted to you than I am.

LETTER XXX.**TO THE SAME.****Madrid, April 9th, 1706.**

THE Queen has received no letters from the King since the 25th ultimo, which makes her very uneasy, although she may easily have foreseen all the obstacles to a regular correspondence with him. However, we have information from the good Archbishop of Saragossa, and from several places on the frontiers of Catalonia, that the King has had a very prosperous march through all that country; that many towns have returned to their duty; that his Majesty had

arrived before Barcelona on Good Friday at noon, and that this city was attacked both by land and sea. If this news be true, and it is extremely probable, we have reason to hope that it will be soon taken, as it contains only a small garrison, and cannot be relieved in sufficient time by the enemy's fleet, no vessels having been perceived upon the coast, and the wind being always against passing the Straits; for we should have received despatches by couriers, to inform us if an enemy's fleet had been seen; therefore we hope that his Majesty will soon effect the conquest of Catalonia. Nothing certain is known of the course which the Archduke will adopt, nor where he is.

Had he shut himself up in Barcelona, you would doubtless have had the satisfaction of seeing him, while he would have had that of being well received in the most brilliant court of Europe. I think, even if he wished to see Marly, and to pay you a visit, you would willingly afford him this pleasure, and that you would not require to be so much pressed as I pressed you to receive the Duke of Alba.

It should seem that God conducts our young conqueror, and that he blinds his enemies, or else they would have conducted themselves with more prudence than they show in all their measures to accomplish their unjust objects. Madrid seems pretty tranquil, and impatiently waits for a successful commencement of this campaign.

All the grandees pay their court to the Queen twice a day, in her antichamber, and her Majesty omits nothing which may induce the King's subjects to redouble their zeal for his service. I receive myself, on account of their Majesties, every polite attention from persons of the greatest consideration here. The ladies pay their court to me very regularly, are extremely gracious, and I fail not to send, principally to the houses of those whose husbands have accompanied the King, any good news which the Queen may have received. Cardinal Porto Carrero also often comes to the palace, and to my private closet; he assures me that he is a greater friend to me than ever; and I endeavour, in order to secure his attachment, to anticipate what I think are all his wishes. In short, the Queen, as well as myself, omits nothing to please everybody as much as possible. The ambassador, on his side, shows every imaginable respect and delicate attention, while he only thinks of doing his duty. His wisdom, prudence, and uprightness, are therefore justly applauded, and it is allowed that he is well worthy of the situation he occupies; the King certainly could not have made a better choice.

I have just learnt that the Portuguese, instead of attacking Badajoz, as they proposed, made a movement towards Alcantara. This is said to be favourable to us, as they will find more difficulties in that quarter. The Duke de Berwick is of

the same opinion; and although it is desirable that there were more troops for the defence of this place, yet he will do all that can be expected from so brave and skilful a general. I am induced to believe that Lord Galloway does not know as much as he does, nor that the Portuguese are very formidable, unless they have more English troops with them than is reported.

Letters, just arrived from Saragossa, confirm the siege of Barcelona, and add that it was attacked in four places. I own that I conceive better than any one how much you are suffering at the present moment, for I am not aware that there can be a more important crisis, nor that any one can be more alive than you and I are to the success of our Kings. I retire to rest, and awake with thoughts which cause too violent a shock to my system for my health not to suffer from it, and the consequence is, that I am much afflicted with rheumatic pains. I do not know whether the Lent, which I have just passed through, has not also a little contributed to them; but this indisposition is not what gives me most uneasiness, it is the weakness of my eye, and the black appearances, which I fancy I always see on that side, for I fear lest this complaint should increase in a place where the air and dust are very injurious to the sight. You are not mistaken, when you think that all my moments are occupied, having scarcely any at my own disposal, and if by

chance I contrive to have some for writing to you, I am always interrupted, for my duty exposes me to the distraction of a number of trifles, which have till now amused the *camerera mayor*, my predecessors: it is not seasonable now to neglect them, although there are more important things to demand my attention.

I return you many very humble thanks for your communications respecting the King's health, which is so valuable on every account, that I praise God heartily for its being in so good a state. I could wish to have the assurance of yours being equally good, but when you omit to mention it, it is a sign that you have nothing favourable to say on the subject, and your silence proceeds from the fear of grieving me, of which I am fully aware; indeed I am so much alive to everything respecting you, that I feel it, without exaggeration, as much as if it were my own case; but how could I be otherwise for one to whom I am under such essential obligations, whose intelligence charms me, and whose heart I admire for its integrity, generosity, and goodness. I will endeavour to merit the place which I occupy in it, by every possible effort that can best demonstrate my sincere affection, and my faithful and respectful attachment.

P. S. I have just received yours of the 28th ultimo. The same report has been circulated at Madrid as at Paris, of the Archduke having gone

to Gibraltar, but it is not confirmed. No dependance can be placed upon such news; there are so many contradictory accounts, which is to be regretted, because it prevents the adoption of proper measures. Your generals then have all departed! M. de Vendome deserves the applause of the public and the love of the people, for he has served the King with zeal and fidelity. I could wish that they were as much disposed to praise another general, whom you honour with your friendship, and whom I very much esteem; I hope that he will at last surmount the great envy excited against him, and that it will be agreed that the praises which he has often merited have been withheld from him only because he is more honest than others. The great Prince has taken a false step, in going to act the malcontent at Rome; he will play a sorry part there, or I deceive myself, if the Romans are the same as I have known them; that is to say, clear sighted, and not over fond of those who can be of no service to them. I fear lest the length of my letter may compel you to throw it into the fire before you have read it, by which perhaps I should be a gainer, provided you are not the less convinced of the affection with which I honour you.

LETTER XXXI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, Holy Thursday, 1706.

COULD not write to you by the last post, and not do it at great length to-day, because of going to church on this sacred festival. The Queen passes hours there, with a modesty and attention which would doubtless edify you, could she be a witness of it. Her devotion increases as she becomes better acquainted with the false pleasures of this world, and how mixed up they

mities of age, and then we are in despair when there is no longer a remedy. Do you not scold this lovely Princess? It appears to me that she would not take it amiss from her sweet disposition; but after all I do not know whether she is not also disposed to act according to her own fancy. Nevertheless, as she appeared to me to have a mind equally great and reasonable, from the conversations I had with her, I think you would do well often to speak to her of her faults, for it is impossible but that in some fortunate moments she does not form the resolution of doing all that she can to get rid of her complaints. If she saw what I have the honour of writing to you on the subject, I might perhaps be properly deemed by her impertinent, and it is not impossible but that she said to you: "Aunt, I beg you will write to the Princess des Ursins, recommending her to give her advice to the three hundred young ladies who are under her direction in the palace, and that she will not meddle with matters that do not concern her."

I have just this moment received yours of the 24th ultimo, and have had the honour of reading it to the Queen, who was delighted with the passage in which you repeat what her sister said to Madame de Rupelmonde, when that lady wished to be introduced by her into the most desirable and enviable places. In reality nothing is more praiseworthy, or capable of causing your Princess to be

admired and loved, than to make known her sentiments to young women, that they must not expect her protection, or participate in her pleasures, but by a prudent demeanour; and I approve of what you say, that the best preachers do not make so great an impression, as what is said by persons of high rank, whom one wishes to please.

Why should I not be satisfied with the Duke de Noailles performing wonders, as he has done? You have no idea of my joy at the praises he obtains; I am interested in his glory on several accounts, with which I flatter myself you are acquainted; and I am sure that the Queen must be pleased with so excellent and polite a man as he is, for there is not a foreigner that I could wish to see here in preference to the duke, however young and amiable he may be.

M. Amelot informs the King of our situation, the position of Marshal de Berwick, the difficulties which our captains general are always making, and in short of everything that is passing in Spain of any consequence, and which create embarrassment. They are sufficient to turn the brain of the most able ministers that ever existed, and I do not know any person but our King, who is capable of giving good and solid advice, for he certainly knows more than all the most able men put together; but, unfortunately, we are at too great a distance, and there are certain events which compel us to form immediate decisions. I

am called to attend mass, and afterwards to hear the passion of our Saviour preached, which is done here on Thursday, because the French preach it on Friday. I have therefore only time to assure you, that I know nobody worthy of my love, honour, and respect, so much as yourself, nor have I anything to reproach myself with on this point.

P.S. Pardon me, I entreat you, for the insipidity of my letter, since I have been interrupted very often, and I have not looked over it again. What then has befallen Madame de Barbezieux, for I am ignorant of the particulars ?

LETTER XXXII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, April 18th, 1706.

GOOD God, Madam, what sad news you are about to hear from Estremadura ! We have just lost Alcantara, and ten battalions made prisoners of war, after a siege of five days. We were aware that the place could not hold out long, because it is not strong, but we expected at least that the garrison would have marched out with the honours

Marshal de Berwick cannot certainly
been able to prevent this misfortune, possess-
he does, so much capacity and zeal for
of the service. If the enemy knew how
t by their success, I know not what would
e of us in this country, where there is not a
place safe for two days. The ambassador has
th informed the King of the Queen's situa-
d of the means he would suggest for oppos-
progress the Portuguese may make. If the
f Spain made a speedy conquest of Cata-
or at least obtained quick possession of
ona, we should have time to breathe; but
ould be quite happy if he could take the
ke, who, it is said, is in the city. According
rs from his Majesty's camp, the ease with
the troops of Girona get into that place

despondency, but thinks only of remedying the misfortunes that surround us, and resigns herself to the dispensations of Providence, which is a source of great consolation to me. It often happens, that when we think all is lost, some fortunate events completely change the aspect of affairs. I live in this hope, for which I may thank my happy temperament, rather than my reason, being more inclined to believe in what gives me pleasure, than to fear what prudence might induce me to anticipate.

I am afraid lest you, who are more under the influence of reason, and which makes you perhaps foresee dangers at a great distance, should be so affected, as to create a gloominess injurious to your health, which is so dear and valuable to me, not to ask it as a favour that you will take all possible care of it.

The death of poor M. de Montlevrier is shocking! I pity him very much, and I feel most sincerely for his lady, to whom I have even wrote a letter of condolence, which I take the liberty of enclosing to you for her: she is a handsome widow, and I do not wonder at the Duchess of Burgundy honouring her with her good opinion. If I could presume so far, I would beg you to present my homage to this charming Princess, for whom my respect and attachment are very great. Every body here speaks with astonishment of the intrepidity with which his

Catholic Majesty exposes himself to the greatest dangers, and his subjects acknowledge that they have a great King in every sense of the word.

You may easily imagine that my time is sufficiently occupied now, which compels me to conclude, by assuring you, that it is impossible to express my devotedness to you.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, May 10th, 1706.

THE last news that you had from this court was so alarming, that I am now delighted at being enabled to send you better by the courier whom the Duke de Berwick dispatches to the King. He will inform you that the enemy are retiring on the side of Plasencia, by which quarter they entered, and that he thinks they will take the route of Ciudad Rodrigo, which is the least evil that could befall us in our present deplorable situation; for it is a great pleasure to know, that the enemy's army is removing to a greater distance from Madrid, when there was reason to believe they would not miss so fine an oppor-

tunity of capturing it, which, to say the truth, nothing could prevent them from doing; and it would have been a dreadful sight to see the Queen betake herself to flight, or remain exposed to the greatest misfortunes. I praise God, therefore, for such a fortunate event, and congratulate you on it, knowing the deep interest you take in whatever concerns the safety of this monarchy and the Queen's tranquillity. In order, however, to a perfect enjoyment of that, she ought to be made acquainted with the capture of Barcelona, and that the King of Spain is in good health, for till then she will be in a state of anxiety.

By a letter dated the 4th instant, from M. Mahony at Alicant, we are informed that the enemy's fleet was still in sight, and that the wind was unfavourable for their succouring the besieged; but to speak candidly to you, my heart will always beat till a courier arrives with the news of the capture of that important place.

The Prince de Vaudemont has sent the Queen all the particulars of the advantages which the Duke de Vendome obtained over the Germans, the day after he joined the army. The action is as glorious for this Prince as it is of vital importance to the two Kings, as well for the present as future benefits that may be expected from it. The opening of the campaign, on the side of Germany, is also a glorious affair, and the appearance of superiority which the French troops

everywhere possess, must be highly gratifying to our great King. May I presume most humbly to entreat you, Madam, to be so good as to signify to him, that he has not a subject, or the most humble dependant, who feels more alive than I do, to everything in which his glory and happiness are concerned. I presume not to take the liberty of writing to him to this effect myself. Do me the favour, I conjure you, of representing to him all that I think, and which you well know how to explain better than I could. The Queen's health is a little affected by these calamitous times, her tumours having increased in size and number, which is not to be wondered at. If a more tranquil period should arrive, her Majesty will take the benefit of the baths, which I hope will afford her some relief. As to myself, I neither think of my bad eye or my rheumatism; my sole thoughts are to endeavour not to be altogether useless in the service of my sovereigns: you have placed me here, and I will try to deserve the continuance of your esteem and the honour of your friendship.

P.S. Good God, what monsters there are in this world!

LETTER XXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, May 21st, 1706.

ONE cannot help, Madam, whether pleased or afflicted, communicating with a friend, as sensible as you are, and who so kindly takes an interest in whatever concerns those who are honoured by your friendship, which I know so well, that I am to-day compelled to impart to you my fresh sources of uneasiness.

The ambassador and myself received letters from M. du Casse, of the 9th instant, yesterday, informing us that Barcelona still held out, that the enemy's fleet had arrived before it, that it had been joyfully welcomed along the whole coast, on which large bonfires were lighted, and that the Count de Toulouse, after ascertaining that his fleet was inferior, had set sail, to avoid the enemy; however, M. du Casse added, that he thought the place would be taken in a day or two after. I could wish it most sincerely; nevertheless I fear lest its truth be doubtful, as some accounts state that there are many land troops on board, which, when joined to those of Lord Peterborough, may greatly embarrass the King of Spain. The Queen

no longer receives any news, because the communication being closed to us by sea, couriers cannot pass, so that their Majesties are in a mutual state of anxiety; and according to all probability, we shall only learn of any success at Barcelona by public report, which will circulate it, true or false, from good or evil motives. That is not all, for, after this event, what will become of his Majesty? He will have a very small army, having been obliged to leave detachments in the rebellious district of Castile, without finding perhaps the necessary subsistence for his household. You will easily conceive that we have nothing but gloomy reflections upon this subject. The grand fleet will probably soon arrive. The Portuguese levy fresh troops, whilst the Spaniards, upon whom every effort has been made to induce them to enlist, refuse, and satisfy themselves with saying, that they will spill the last drop of their blood, without being willing to risk spilling the first. Such, Madam, is our present situation. The Queen views things as they are, and as they may turn out in future; meanwhile her virtue and courage sustain her, which is a comfort, as well as to know that your health is better, for certainly no one wishes it to be more perfect than myself.

P.S. I shall have the honour of writing to you more at large by the first opportunity, in answer to yours of the 7th instant, dated from Meudon. I should have, perhaps, suspected you had been

there to play lansquenet, and pay your court to Monseigneur, if I did not know that your foible was chequers; however, I am very glad that your health is sufficiently recovered to enable you boldly to face the piercing winds, to which that beautiful house is exposed. You flatter me too much, Madam, and I am apprehensive that it will in time make me vain; I therefore cry out for quarter, and if you do not grant it, I shall complain to your friend the Marquis de Villeroi, who will doubtless take my part against you on this occasion.

LETTER XXXV.**TO THE SAME.****Madrid, May 24th, 1706.**

OUR situation is much worse than when I had the honour of last addressing you: we were afraid that the siege of Barcelona would be protracted, and that the arrival of the enemy's fleet would bring succours, which might add to the King's embarrassment; but as we were assured that it would not prevent the place from being captured, we continued to bear up with the aid of this con-

g reflection. We are unfortunately disappointed, as the disagreeable news has arrived of the progress of the siege; the insurmountable obstacles which the King met with in returning through Aragon, and of his being obliged to retreat into France by way of Roussillon, leaving behind him little artillery, and a part of his provisions. It may be added, that this ill-fated Prince retreats with troops that are vanquished, worn out, deprived of every necessary, and still marching through the infamous Catalonia, where a step cannot be taken without being exposed to ambushes, filled with an enraged mob, capable of every villanous deed. This is a source of the greatest affliction to the Queen; the care of her own person, and all the risks, which she knows she is about to run, solely occupy her attention in compassion to

deration to the subject ; if after all, we should fail, it will be, it seems to me, more just to pity than to blame us. It is a very difficult thing to avoid public censure whatever is done, but that is of little consequence, provided we are so fortunate as to obtain the approbation of the King our master. Allow me, I conjure you, to beg you very humbly to assure him, that no subject ever carried her zeal farther for his glory, nor has made greater sacrifices in obeying him, when he commanded me to return here, and would give her life more freely than I would yield mine, were it necessary for his service.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, May 26th, 1706.

MY letter of the 24th instant, which I wrote to you by the courier, dispatched by the ambassador to the King, gave you such dreadful news, that I could almost wish some accident had happened him, which might retard his arrival, so as to give time to the present one, who is sent on to arrive before him. We have this day received news, from our good Archbishop of Saragossa, which

appears to contradict the news we had previously received from the latter city, and which gives us even reason to hope for the capture of Barcelona, and the King's return through Arragon. This would make our situation very different from that in which we were two days ago, although we are still between fear and hope; for as all we learn, either good or bad, comes only from enemies, who circulate the news that suits them best, the well disposed, who impart it to us, cannot vouch for its truth, as they always add that it wants confirmation. The people of Madrid, who are not naturally of a warlike turn, but who love the King and Queen very much, came in crowds into the courtyard of the palace, imploring blessings on their Majesties, and crying out, "*Death to the traitors!*" It is a great comfort to see the bulk of the people well disposed towards the sovereign. God grant that I may soon have to communicate news which will restore your tranquillity! not desiring less, I can assure you, Madam, your peace of mind, than my own.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 6th, 1706.

THE ambassador dispatched a courier to the King yesterday evening, by whom I could not write to you, because I was occupied for the Queen. I seize, with pleasure, the present opportunity, by one which the Duke de Noailles is sending, to inform you that the King of Spain has arrived in good health, amidst the acclamations of the people, and so loud that all the courts of the palace resound with them, while I am writing this, crying out like madmen, and imploring a thousand benedictions on their Majesties; all this, with good troops, would be admirable, but we have very few, and I know not how we shall hold out till those from France arrive. As armies cannot fly, and as that of the Portuguese is on its march towards Salamanca, it will be very difficult for the King of Spain to avoid being very much embarrassed. I leave it to M. Amelot to inform the King of what is in contemplation, as to the measure to be adopted in so deplorable a crisis; for women, you know, and I much less than any other, understand nothing about war.

PRINCESS DES URSINS.

I have had the pleasure of conferring with Duke de Noailles, and of mentioning you to him. I am delighted at being able to divert my mind from the several conversations I have had with him, which have differed from his usual manner, he can be serious when he pleases, and at other times he adopts a playfulness quite unknown to him, but which is not the less agreeable to the Queen, indeed I already perceive she is highly pleased with it.

I take the liberty of writing to the King to manifest my gratitude for the cardinal's hat which he has been pleased to place on the head of my brother. Although this dignity be the most honorable to which he could aspire, I should hold it in little estimation, I assure you, if I did not think that it will enable him to serve his Majesty more fully in the court of Rome, where he has been moreover pleased to confide his affairs to him. I entreat, Madam, that you will assist me on this occasion, in communicating to the King how sensibly I feel his kindness. You see that I have recourse to you on every emergency, placing more confidence in you than in any other person, you, whose generous heart I know, and whose assistance constitutes my chief consolation.

P. S. I conjure you, Madam, to tell the late Marshal de Noailles, that I have not leisure to write to her respecting the good qualities of her son.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 13th, 1706.

I HAVE not the fortitude to express to you my sorrow at what has just occurred in Flanders, and can only observe, that I feel this misfortune with all the acuteness of a subject devoted to her King, who loves his glory and her country, and who but too well foresees the deplorable consequences which may result from the loss which France and Spain have just experienced. I have moreover an additional source of grief, on account of the King's health, which, I fear, cannot but be injured by so many real causes of anguish; for notwithstanding his Majesty's fortitude on every occasion, and his resignation to the dispensations of Providence, he cannot help feeling them, and it would be almost miraculous if they did not affect his constitution. Meanwhile, this great man is so necessary to the world, and the cause which he supports is so just, that I hope the Divine Goodness will preserve him many years, and that you and I shall have the consolation of seeing him more happy again.

We are as yet unacquainted with the particulars

of this disastrous day, nor what forced Marshal de Villeroi to an action before the arrival of the eighteen thousand men which Marshal de Marsin was bringing up. He is much to be pitied!

The Queen is in a state of great anxiety on account of her sister, and her pleasure on learning that she is pregnant is much embittered by the apprehension lest her constant agitations should injure her health. It would be almost desirable that our two Princesses had not such feeling hearts as they possess, since they suffer too much from the misfortunes which assail them. I sincerely pity poor Madame de Soubise, for having lived to see her children killed or wounded. I am informed that Count d'Egmont received several wounds, which I much fear may prove mortal, for I love him as if he were my own son, and am therefore afflicted at his situation, and the pain it must give my friend the Archbishop of Aix.

We have detained the Duke de Noailles some days at Madrid, but we shall lose him to-morrow. I have procured for him, as often as possible, the honour of paying his court to the Queen, and as he possesses much intelligence and taste, she has enjoyed his animated and agreeable conversation very much; it will be for him to inform you what he thinks of her Majesty, and whether he has discovered in her those defects which you have always appeared anxious to make me confess. I think

he is satisfied with our ambassador, and all the particulars of our situation here have been communicated to him

* * *

The Prince of Asturias, whom I certainly have no doubt will come into the world about the middle of August, is a pleasing event, which I fondly anticipate; but if it should prove only a Princess, I shall not experience a moment's chagrin, provided she and her lovely mother enjoy good health, and hoping that in a year's time we shall have a Prince. You will no doubt observe, that I am very happy in not taking matters so much to heart, and you will be correct, for it is one of the greatest blessings on earth to possess such a frame of mind as I do.

I no longer imagined that the fever would visit you again, and provided we had a favourable change in our affairs, I am convinced that your health would always continue good. It appears to me, that you had not been so well for a long time as since gaining the battle. You, however, suffered a little from the joyful emotion which it caused you (a sensation which I always experience from either good or bad news); but you would find, by a continuance of agreeable events, that your constitution would become habituated to it, and that your frame of body being no longer agitated, you would not experience the same indispositions

which have hitherto attacked you. Truly there is nothing which I so ardently desire, for I will not poison or deceive you, nor abuse your credulity: what I wish, is, to be pleased with everything about you, to confide to you the inmost recesses of my mind, and to love you with all the affection of which my heart is capable.

P. S. We have at last received the child's clothes, than which nothing could be better contrived, or more neat and simple; there is not the least injury done to any of the articles. Her Majesty will show the whole to the ladies who pay their court to her on Tuesday, and at the same time the Prince's cradle, which we shall display for the purpose, in his room, and which I did not think it proper to exhibit till it was all put together, in order that everything might appear to the greatest advantage.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 26th, 1706.

I GAVE the letter, which I wrote to you two days ago, to the Duke de Noailles; it contained a statement of our situation at that time, and of the

uncertainty attending the steps to be taken by her Majesty. Marshal de Berwick has extricated us from it, by saying that there was no longer any ground for hope as to the proceedings of the enemy, who were marching direct for Madrid, and that being unable to defend any of the places through which they might pass, there could be no hesitation about the Queen's departure, nor any time to be lost. However, it has been thought best to defer this measure, and I think her Majesty will not depart till the day after to-morrow. To tell you whether we shall easily get away, is more than I know. The grandees do their utmost to induce their Majesties to await tranquilly with them the pleasure of the enemy; but this advice is not relished by the King or Queen, who consider it derogatory to their interest and glory. Therefore, after observing every kind of respect and propriety of conduct, their Majesties will act in the best way they can for each other. It will only be for the French here to be afraid, if we are capable of it in the present conjuncture; for to speak the truth, it is rather critical; but we shall abstain from it and do our duty, leaving the issue to Providence. I will send you the particulars of all the persons who are to have the honour of accompanying the Queen, which will be as few as possible, in order to avoid unnecessary confusion and expence, for which there is no need. It is not yet known whether many gran-

dees will accompany the King, of which I doubt very much.

We wait with inconceivable impatience for the arrival of the French troops, which the King is pleased to send for the assistance of their Majesties, for without them all our hopes are at end. A courier arrived to-day from Marshal de Tessé, with news that they were in full march. The Marshal seems to be well satisfied with the kindness of the King, who assured him, by letter, that he approved his conduct; and he is equally satisfied with one which he has received from you and M. de Chamillard; he stood in need of such consolation. Our friend Marshal de Villeroi is, without contradiction, the most unfortunate of men; since things are carried to such an extremity, as for it to be said that he is wrong for being unhappy! If his friends mean that as an excuse for all the faults which are imputed to him by his enemies, I do not know of which party he ought to be the most distrustful. For my part, I pity him sincerely, and shall not condemn him without hearing his reasons. I am very glad that M. de Chamillard's journey to Flanders has been productive of good; if the troops can rally, as you hope, it may check the rapid career of the enemy. I have a constant source of hope in the piety and fortitude of the King, for God will not abandon a christian Prince who has done so much for religion. I must conclude; for being overwhelmed with

every description of uneasiness, I have only time to assure you of my affectionate respect for your person.

P.S. I break open my letter, which was not sent off, to inform you that a courier has just arrived from Marshal de Berwick with the news that the enemy was on his march towards this quarter.—June 17th.

LETTER XL.

TO THE SAME.

Berlanga, June 24th, 1706.

WE were obliged at length to quit Madrid, Madam, and as it was desirable to keep up appearances to the last, to prevent the people from knowing our intentions, we came away without even the most necessary articles. The Queen had no bed for some days at first, but fortunately the Chevalier de Bragelonne, commander of a detachment of French troops, which escorts us, had quite a new one, which was found very opportune. But it was not so easy to procure other things, for her Majesty had only a couple of eggs for her supper, and did not fare much better the following day.

The Queen is going to Burgos. Count de Santestevan, grand master of her household, the Marquis de Castel Rodriguez, grand almoner, and the Duke de Popoli, one of the four captains of the King's guards, were of opinion, that she should go to Pampeluna, where she would have been in greater safety, and consequently less exposed to another retreat; but the King, the ambassador, and the Duke de Berwick, gave the preference to Burgos, because it is a city of Castile; and the King's intention was to transfer the councils there, thinking by such a measure to keep the people more easily to their duty. As for the Queen, she could have wished to have gone to Pampeluna, being convinced that it is only force that can sustain our party, and that the King would have had all his troops more at his disposal, if she had been in a place less exposed to the enemy; and moreover, her Majesty considered it is a kind of relief to be out of the reach of all sources of uneasiness. If she had gone quickly into Navarre, she might have done it without risk. God grant that she may not find more in the direction she has taken! For we must pass through Aranda de Duero the day after to-morrow, and which is only twelve leagues from Segovia. I do not know whether we have not also to fear lest the reinforcements on board the English fleet should not be landed at Bilboa, in which case, our retreat would be cut off, for the

enemy would get to Vittoria sooner than the Queen, and the *miquelets*, who according to every probability will have caused all Arragon to revolt by this time, would not allow us to take another road. The Queen's situation is much to be pitied, having with her only myself, Lazafata, a lady, and a chambermaid, the scarcity of money preventing her from bringing more attendants. She had appointed *una Senorade honor** and *lutocadera*, † as the oldest of her ladies; they came, but each having asked a hundred pistoles, on account of what is due to them, it was found impossible to make this advance, at a time when every farthing is wanted for the pay of the troops. Notwithstanding this small number of servants, the journey is expensive, because we must carry with us everything we want, which makes the expence about a hundred pistoles per day. The greatest part of the above sum is given on credit; but this resource cannot continue in the present situation of things, therefore we shall perhaps soon not know where to put our heads. Cardinal de Porto Carero might have remedied the evil, by consenting to an expedient which had been proposed to him. Cardinal Aquaviva has exerted himself to the utmost on this occasion, to overcome the obstinacy of his brother, but in vain. Cardinal Porto Ca-

* A maid of honour. † Dresser.

rerò promised at first to accede, but probably evil disposed persons turned his brain. I know not really after such an action, what to think of his heart; I have just been told that he is gone to Toledo. Since my return, I have done my utmost to please him, and he promised me that if the Queen was obliged to return, he would accompany her everywhere, which he repeated to her Majesty in presence of the ambassador. Perhaps the unfortunate affair of Flanders, added to his natural timidity, may have induced him to take other steps.

The King has just wrote to the Queen, desiring her to send her jewels to France, either to be sold or pledged. The ambassador also writes that it is absolutely necessary; therefore her Majesty sends them by the same courier, and I address them to M. de Labourdonnaye, *intendant* of Bourdeaux, who is at present at Bayonne. There is amongst these jewels, a celebrated pearl, called the *pelegrina*, and the diamond which the Spaniards call the *estangué*, to which the Queen has added all her own. Vazat, an old servant of the King's, is the bearer of this treasure. I send with him an officer, who has the honour of being a foster brother of the Duke de Berri, and of whom the Chevalier de Bragelonne has spoken to me highly: they accompany the ambassador's courier, who is one of his secretaries, in whom he places great confidence. Such are the measures which we have adopted

as best, in the Queen's difficulties, of retaining her remaining servants. I fear lest these jewels may not bring a very large sum, unless they are taken to Paris; and I am still more at a loss how to send their proceeds to the King of Spain, the transactions by bills of exchange being so much interrupted.

The Queen's retinue is composed of the Duchesses de Medina Sidonia, de Veraguas, d'Ossuna, de Popoli, and several other ladies, to whom her Majesty shows all the friendly regards which they deserve from their attachment to her. So numerous a retinue creates much trouble on account of lodgings, and does not leave the Queen or myself a moment's leisure, so that I am very much fatigued; however, I must take courage to the end, and place my trust in God. It seems to me that I have still a thousand things to say, but the most important is to assure you, Madam, that I am entirely devoted to you.

LETTER XLI.

TO THE SAME.

Lerma, July 4th, 1706.

THE Queen arrived here yesterday, in such hot weather as you are unacquainted with in France,

and which is seldom so great in this province. The day was so long, that her Majesty was obliged to stop some time, to rest the escort, which is to conduct us to Burgos, where the court and the councils will remain till the King of Spain can return to Madrid. Our uncertainty with respect to the army having crossed the Duero, determined the Duke de Popoli, and the other two gentlemen, to whom the safety of the Queen's person is confided, to take a much longer road than that which is usually travelled. The reports from different places were such, that they could scarcely do otherwise; but having since heard that there was no further cause to be afraid, although we had to pass within four or five leagues of some small towns, which have already submitted to the Portuguese, we turned back, in order to avoid approaching nearer to Navarre, to which province the enemy supposed the Queen would retire, only for the purpose of passing into France with the King, who was abandoning all Spain to the Archduke. This countermarch occupied four long days; but it was nevertheless necessary, to encourage the troops, who began to desert, and to inform the people, who continued loyal, that their Majesties would defend them to the last extremity. All the country through which we have passed appeared to me full of zeal and love for Philip V. The misfortune is, that Castile is the poorest part of Spain, and that the nation is so different to what it was

formerly, that the best cities have not the courage to resist the first summons which the enemy's partizans choose to send them. I hope that this dangerous situation will change as soon as the French troops make their appearance; but they must begin their operations as soon as they arrive, for if the English are suffered to remain some time in Madrid, besides the dreadful consequences that it would be productive of out of the city, they will seduce the people by their artifices, and we should no longer be able to recover what we so easily lose, but by the very difficult conquest of all Spain. The Duke de Berwick appears to me now to comprehend this necessity for acting before putting the troops into cantonments. May Heaven prosper his plans, and console us after so many sources of affliction, by a victory over the Portuguese, which would entirely recover the affairs of this country!

The Queen is in good health, notwithstanding all her sufferings. Her fortitude will never again be put to so severe a trial: and I also think that she will never deserve more praise than at present, by the resignation to the will of God with which she supports her misfortunes. Nothing is certainly a more singular coincidence, than to see this great Princess obliged to leave her capital to retire to Burgos, in the midst of numerous obstacles; at the same time that her mother does the same thing, to escape being burnt in her own house.

I am very much indebted to the King for his proceedings against the Chevalier d'Espennes, as this example was necessary. However, I cannot help being affected at the disgrace of this gentleman on account of Cardinal de Janson, to whom he is related; but I can truly say, that I have had no other share in it, than that of having been the object of his madness for not having been able to gratify his ambition, which made him think there was nothing which he did not deserve.

How I pity Marshal de Villeroi! Hated by the public, which never pardons; incapable for the future of rendering the essential services to his master with which he might flatter himself; and more unfortunate still, from the fatal and weighty consequences of the loss which he has sustained; I think he must be almost deranged, and insensible to everything but his misfortunes.

The courier not having departed, I shall date this letter the 7th instant, at Burgos, where the Queen arrived the day before yesterday, in the evening, amidst the acclamations of the people, who afterwards serenaded her under the windows of her apartment, and sang the praises of their Majesties. When this was over, the Queen, from her balcony, cried out *viva los Castellanos!* Long life to the Castilians!—which so transported them with joy, that they again gave a thousand blessings to their Majesties. Nevertheless, if we do not gain a battle, I know not what will become of us in this

country, and I fear as much for Naples, from the communications of M. de la Tremouille and the Viceroy. Had we the misfortune to lose Spain, it would be at least desirable to preserve the Italian states; and the Prince who should reign over them could not fail of being a great King, and might be happy.

LETTER XLII.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, July 15th, 1706.

COURIERS do not pass regularly through Burgos, and we receive our letters only after they have been sent to the King's army, which postpones the pleasure of receiving your favours, and will perhaps be the cause of your not having mine so often; at all events, I will do my utmost to write to you every week. It is probable that the affairs of this country will, for the future, furnish more agreeable news to send you. The unfortunate affair of Flanders had completely depressed the Castilians. They supposed that the French troops would not come into Spain; and since we left Madrid, the enemy made them believe that their Majesties thought only of withdrawing to France:

hence the facility with which some towns have submitted to the Archduke, and it is wonderful that the evil is not greater. Now that the French army is almost upon the point of forming a junction with the King, every one resumes courage. Segovia has already taken up arms against the Portuguese; the other towns form associations for their defence, and furnish whatever they can in money and provisions. The Spanish troops also show such a good disposition, that we begin to fear lest the enemy will leave Madrid before we are able to attack them. Were they bold enough to hazard a battle, the Archduke's reign in Castile would soon be at an end, few of the Portuguese would reach home, and Saragossa would not long remain in a state of revolt. Andalusia, and the other neighbouring provinces, make such great exertions, that it does not appear we have anything to fear from that quarter, nor from Cadiz. Valladolid, which appeared to be wavering, (owing perhaps to the disloyalty of some ministers) gave on the 7th instant a very striking proof of its fidelity, for the whole town, men, women, and children, came out of their houses with arms in their hands, crying out with such fury "Long life to Philip V. and death to the traitors!" that it was remarked as a happy circumstance that this effusion of loyalty was not followed by the death of all those who were suspected of their attachment to the house of Austria.

These provinces, poor as they are, endeavour to raise money for the King, and we are already sure of eight thousand pistoles, which, although not having yet received, I sent in part three days ago to the ambassador, having contrived to get it advanced here upon my own credit. We are in negociation for another sum, which may amount to fifteen thousand; this will be a considerable amount at such a tumultuous time, when all commercial transactions are suspended. We hear from Arragon that several large towns have formed an association for their mutual defence, and even to attack Saragossa; the misfortune is, that we have no army to furnish them for their money, and that these people ask for one. In short, if God assists us to preserve the Indies, and the kingdom of Naples, we have not lost much in leaving Madrid; but, on the contrary, this event will show their Majesties those who are loyal to them, or favourable to their enemies.

The Queen has very bad accomodations here, and is in want of everything, which she bears with so much fortitude, that she does not seem to feel any privation. Truly, I do not know if there be another Princess upon earth who could, like her, find within herself sources of consolation in so chequered and painful an existence.

I pity Marshal de Tessé, and he merits your esteem, as it was not his fault that the siege of Barcelona was commenced; nor can the other

obstacles be imputed to him which have caused its failure. He is blamed for having been the cause of our leaving Madrid, by marching his troops back by way of France; but worse might have happened if he had found the country inundated by the overflowing of the rivers in returning by way of Arragon.

As to Marshal de Villeroi's affair, I do not recognize him as the same man, from what you tell me of his proceedings; for after so many unfortunate reverses, he ought to have been the first to have demanded his recall, as the only measure he had to adopt. How much men are to be pitied, and how little they know how to act when despair deranges their natural state of mind! The King appears to me still greater by his compassion for him on this occasion, than by all his other virtues, which oblige even his enemies to admire him; and I am very sorry that the public are ignorant of the particulars, which prove beyond contradiction, that his Majesty is the best friend and most generous man upon earth. I shall be bolder than you, for I am about writing to Marshal de Villeroi; but I shall nevertheless send you the letter open, in order that you may destroy it if you do not approve its contents. My object is, to praise him as if he had done all that was possible, not being allowed, as I think, otherwise to alarm so estimable and unfortunate a friend. Good God! how I fear lest all these disagreeable

circumstances should give the King great uneasiness and affect his health! As to other matters, I care but little about them, because God and his Majesty will provide a remedy, but I shudder when I think of this last misfortune.

There are, doubtless, very great objections to sending M. de Vendome into Flanders, as any other general will not execute his plans so well as himself; and it is to be feared that his army will not have the same confidence in his successor; nevertheless, I hope much from the Duke of Orleans. A nephew of the King's will always be adored by the troops; and if Turin is captured he will find himself so superior to the enemy, that he will easily be able to render all their efforts abortive.

I presume not to divine the reasons which prevented M. de Villars from going to Italy, as I should perhaps assign some which would hurt him in my estimation. After mature consideration, I think Marshal de Marsin suits that station better. The Chevalier d'Espennes would deserve to be brought to trial, unless he proves what he advances; in which case, one cannot consider him as a madman; but you are right in thinking him still worse, and I am convinced the King is of the same opinion. I beg you, therefore, to be merciful on your guard against the use which some people will make of his extravagancies. M. Amelot writes to tell me, that he thinks it his duty to warn me

that this affair awakes my old enemies, and he pities me very much for being the sport of madmen or knaves. I enclose you the letter which the Chevalier d'Espennes wrote to me before he went to France; it will show you his character, and that he did not consider me, at least then, as an enemy to the King of Spain. The proceedings of this man are beyond my comprehension, and would be calculated to inspire me with horror for all mankind, if I had not taken it into my head for a long time, to look upon the generality of things with indifference.

In order to amuse you a little, I will give you a description of my apartment. It is twelve or thirteen feet square; a large window which does not shut, and facing the south, occupies nearly one side of it; one door, rather low, opens into the Queen's chamber, and another still narrower, leads into a winding passage, which I dare not enter, although there are always two or three lamps burning, because the flooring is so bad, that I should risk breaking my neck. I cannot say that the walls are white, for they are very filthy. My travelling bed is the only article of furniture I have, except a supple seat and deal table, which serve me in turns for my toilet, writing-desk, and to eat my dessert upon from the Queen's table, having neither kitchen, nor perhaps money enough to keep one. Her Majesty and I do nothing but laugh at all this; but for God's sake! let not the Duchess of

Burgundy grieve about it, for I have been still worse off in my travels! The hope I cherish that the King of Spain will beat the Portuguese before the end of the month, should they dare to wait for him, makes me forget that we might be better off, and I would even give away my bed, provided you were to have no more attacks of the fever. I beg you, therefore, to be convinced, that nobody was ever so sincerely devoted to any person, as I am to you.

P. S. I enclose you the letter which the city of Seville has addressed to the King, because it will afford you pleasure. The other towns of Andalusia write nearly to the same effect, and appear quite resolved to continue faithful to his Majesty. The King has just written to the Queen to say that the Portuguese army, having marched to Guadalaxara, the Duke de Berwick judged it proper to retire to Frienca; and his Majesty adds, that he shall have it fully in his power to go as far as Almazan, in order to avoid being obliged any longer to fall back, hoping to be soon joined there by all the troops from France. One of the enemy's couriers has been taken; from whom it has been learnt, that the Archduke is coming to Saragossa, and that his object is to join the Portuguese, with the troops which he is bringing from Catalonia. Thus everything is preparing for a great action, since we may conclude that Lord Galloway will risk a battle if he receives this succour. Redouble your prayers,

and those of our angels of Saint Cyr, for we have great need of them. I pity you very much on account of the death of so many of your friends, and for your fear of losing, moreover, two of those pupils, who are worthy of your esteem and the honour of your friendship: such losses seem to be among the greatest misfortunes of this life.

LETTER XLIII.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, July 30th, 1706.

SINCE the Queen has been here, not a single courier has passed though this city for France, and they have probably been dispatched from the King's camp by way of Pampeluna, which is the reason that I could only write to you by individuals who are going to Bayonne. There is one at this moment going through from Marshal de Berwick, who cannot be detained, so that I have only time to inform you that the Queen is, thank God, in good health, notwithstanding her awkward predicament. In truth, when I think that between now and to-morrow, his Majesty may give a battle, on which depends his glory and his crown, I

confess that I am so dreadfully agitated that I have only courage to say that you are dearer to me than myself.

P.S. Public prayers are daily put up in this city, at which her Majesty attends, and I can assure you prays sincerely to God, who, I trust, will protect a Prince and Princess, who are in truth two angels. What a source of joy to our King, if he learns that the King, his grandson, has conquered his enemies, and what a satisfaction for us, Madam, who feel so great an interest in every thing which concerns his Majesty! I have not time to write to any one but yourself.

LETTER XLIV.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, August 5th, 1706.

THE King of Spain has acquainted the Queen this evening, that he had sent the Marquis de Mexorada, with four hundred horse, to Madrid, to bring that city back to his obedience; and that as soon as he should hear of its reduction, his Majesty would dispatch a courier to convey the news to the Queen, and afterwards to France. As he may arrive to-night, I beg leave to rejoice

with you beforehand, as you are fully aware of the importance it is to the King to be master of his capital, in spite of all the traitors who are there, and the vicinity of the Portuguese army, who cannot prevent it. This is as disgraceful to the latter, as it is glorious for his Majesty. Both himself, and all those who are about his person, appear to be in great hopes of either beating the enemy or destroying them by famine. We possess the advantage of having the people in our favour, and they are not less animated by the justice of their cause, and zeal for their legitimate sovereign, than were the unworthy Catalonians in aiding an usurping Prince, contrary to every right human and divine.

The ambassador tells me that it is impossible to describe the love of the Castilians, and mentions as a very singular instance of it, what the inhabitants of Jadraxa have done. Such people as these deserve to be loved, because they are influenced solely by goodness of heart and purity of motive. I beg you will abstain, as much as possible, from feeling too much for the lords and ladies who have accompanied the Queen, and other persons who have left Madrid, because it would be sensibility thrown away upon individuals, the greatest part of whom do not care a straw whether Charles III. or Philip V. be their sovereign, and who wish to see, before they declare themselves of either party, on which side fortune will turn. Could you hear and see all that we see, you would soon know

better than myself, that it requires keen discernment to note their proceedings, in order to make use of them at the proper time and place, which the Queen has an admirable knack of knowing how to do. She is retiring to rest, which necessarily interrupts my correspondence with you; for I feel myself at my ease when I have the honour of addressing you, fancying myself near you in that spot, where one is sheltered from the wind, and the dishonesty which are to be met with sometimes in other places where you are not. I should be glad to answer the two last letters with which you have honoured me, and which deserve my thanks, for the many kind things they contain; but I am obliged to postpone it for a week, and send by the usual courier, who, by a new regulation, will pass through this place, which relieves my mind very much, because otherwise, I should not have known how to communicate the state of the Queen's health, which is, thank God, tolerably good. Her surgeon has written an account of it to M. Maréchal, and desired him to consult M. Fagon about the waters. I take the liberty of sending you his letter, in order that you may be sure of the answer. But this is not all; I must entreat you to tell my friend M. de Pontchartrain, that I will send him the letters of M. Argenson by the first post, which will go from Burgos in a week; and that I shall answer him upon the subject of what the King had ordered

him to communicate to me, with a condescension at which I am infinitely affected, and for the purpose of giving my sentiments upon it. You will see the great dependance I place upon your friendship in entrusting you with so many commissions; but you are capable of excusing many other things as well as my importunities, for which I certainly do not the less respect you.

P.S. If our affairs prosper in Spain, as there is reason to hope will be the case, by what we hear from the army, it will make a very powerful impression upon other countries. I wait with indescribable impatience for the siege of Turin to be so far advanced, as to render the fall of that important fortress no longer doubtful. I could also wish, that the army of Italy may place as much confidence in the Duke of Orleans as it did in M. de Vendome. I am very glad of the favourable reception which the King has given to Marshal de Tessé.

LETTER XLV.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, August 6th, 1706.

I DID myself the honour of writing to you yesterday evening, and I told you that I kept my

letter ready to send it by a courier which the King of Spain would dispatch as soon as he learnt what Madrid would do for him, and that this courier would probably come in the night. He did not arrive, however, till six o'clock this evening; but we excuse him, for he brings very good news. As you will learn all the particulars, and the King should not for a moment be deprived of the joy which he will have in knowing what a prosperous turn the affairs of his grandson have taken, I shall content myself with congratulating you on knowing that our enemies find themselves more embarrassed at present in Spain than we are. Let the Duchess of Burgundy and you be comforted then. God will help us all, and I hope I shall have the pleasure of seeing our common misfortunes finish, and your health restored, which I certainly do not less wish for than my own, my heart being devoted to you the remainder of my life.

P.S. It is some time since the King, with an extreme condescension, at which I am greatly affected, as I ought to be, ordered M. de Pontchartrain to send me the depositions of the Chevalier d'Espennes against me, in order that I might communicate to this minister what I should think it necessary to reply to all these calumnies, which you will see from the copies I send you. It is indeed a very cruel thing to have to give an account of my conduct upon such infamous accusa-

tion : this is a visitation of Providence; and I can assure you, Madam, it is no slight mortification, thus to be so humiliated.

LETTER XLVI.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, August 12th, 1706.

You will have learnt by the letters of M. Amelot all that has passed at Madrid, as soon as the people had an opportunity of testifying their fidelity to the legitimate King. There never was such joy, nor perhaps so striking an instance of love and zeal for the person of the Prince. Had they had their will, they would have put to death all the traitors; but as Spaniards of a certain rank think very differently from the people, the person whom the King sent to Madrid to require its submission, saved their lives by a capitulation, disgraceful to royalty and prejudicial to the state. The houses of those who appeared the most attached to the Archduke were pillaged the two first days; but attended with a circumstance that will give you pleasure: not a Spaniard appropriated to himself the spoils; they carried them into the public squares, where they burnt them, saying that

they did not plunder to enrich themselves, but merely to chastise traitors and ungrateful wretches. In short, it must be confessed that there is not a better people than those of Castile, and that if there had been as much probity in those who ought to set an example to others, the enemy would soon lose the hopes of conquering Spain by the Spaniards themselves. They ought already to be very much undeceived, as to the idea which had been given them of a general revolution. There has not been a town up to the present moment that has yielded, except to a superior force; and as soon as the enemy's troops have removed a little way from them, they have voluntarily returned to their duty. The provinces continue to raise troops for their own defence; while the poorest places contribute what they can, and even beyond their ability. The day before yesterday a curate brought a hundred and twenty pistoles to the Queen for the King, being the contribution of his village, which contained only a hundred and twenty very poor families. He told her Majesty, that his parishoners were ashamed at sending so little; but they entreated her to reflect, that the same purse contained a hundred and twenty hearts, which would be faithful to her till death. The good man wept in addressing the Queen, and made us weep also. Another small place, containing only twenty houses, sent fifty pistoles, with similar protestations.

The two armies are still in presence of each other; that of the enemy must experience great difficulty in finding provisions: and I think M de Berwick endeavours to render them still more scarce. The Archduke has arrived from Arragon, and Peterborough from Valencia, with four thousand men in all. This is a considerable reinforcement for a small army; however they have not caused any alarm, because our troops are better than theirs. If the enemy's fleet does not overwhelm us, by landing fifteen or twenty thousand men in Biscay, we shall conclude this campaign without any new misfortunes; but if all their preparations are against us, it will be impossible to resist them.

The King is very condescending to notice the part we take in the misfortunes of the state, and in what is interesting to his Majesty. Good heavens! should not his troubles be also ours? And what greater interest can we have in the world than the welfare of so gracious a master? I could wish to redeem with my blood the unfortunate day of Flanders, much less as a good French woman, than as a creature entirely devoted to the King, and who would sacrifice herself for his glory.

What obligations am I not under to Madam, for all that you write to me concerning Count d'Egmont? He is a good man, whose loss of his property will never affect, but

renders him less able to serve the King. I entreat you to continue to him your kindnesses.

I have communicated your answer to Cardinal Aquaviva, who is very well satisfied at recovering the King's good opinion, and I am at a loss how he could be suspected, at a time that his brothers and nephews, who act only by his advice, give so many proofs of their zeal for the service of the King their master. The Chevalier d'Espennes cannot certainly be looked upon as a madman. With a cross-grained wit, a person may, by the aid of certain facts, compose a ridiculous and equally false story, but to suppose conversations which never took place, a man must be a liar; and if they are criminal, a scoundrel. The Marquis de Brancas told me that he spoke to him when he visited M. de Surville at the Bastile; that he appeared very well satisfied with himself, and fully expected soon to regain his liberty. If it is the King's will, I have nothing to say: but if he depends solely upon the credit of his patrons, I presume to represent to his Majesty through you, that this man deserves, in strict justice, exemplary punishment; that he is rather a knave than a madman, and that this affair has already given rise to a rumour here that I am about to be recalled, which may occasion fresh cabals, equally embarrassing and prejudicial to the service of the two Kings. I was informed, a few days ago, that the Chevalier complained to every body that I had

thwarted him in his prospects, by removing him from the King and Queen. It is true that the liberties which he took displeased me, and that I preferred his being with the army, where his duty called him, to the Court, because he talked one day to the Queen respecting the Duke of Savoy, in a manner that shocked her Majesty, and which was very rude in a courtier; but I endeavoured to serve him in what appeared reasonable with respect to Cardinal de Janson. When I can lay my hands upon my papers I will send you his letters to the King, in which he takes the liberty of desiring his Majesty to assure the Queen of his respects, which will doubtless appear to you very presumptuous in a lieutenant of the galleys, who has certainly no other merit than the ambition of wishing to cut a figure in the world, with a moderate sprinkling of talents.

I have this moment received your letter of the 1st instant. I beg you will not distress yourself in writing to me with your own hand; and when you apologize for it, I am ashamed at so often employing a secretary myself, and I should fear lest you disapproved of it. The inflammation of your eyes alarms me, and was not in the least wanting to make me approve of whatever can give you ease.

God grant the prophecy of the Duke de Vendome respecting the affairs of Italy may be realized! We have been much astonished to learn

that Prince Eugene had crossed so many rivers without firing a shot; it is true that he has still a great distance to march, and that our troops, when united, will much more easily defend the difficult parts of the country which he has to cross; but a siege as long as that of Turin, added to the heat of the weather in Piedmont, usually ruins an army. I fear very much lest the enemy be not as long before Menin; they possess so many facilities in conveying their tremendous artillery, and their *materiel* is so complete, that a governor of the present day, who is besieged by them, is really to be pitied. I am at a loss respecting Marshal de Villeroi; doubtless he feels his misfortune and ours, such as it is, which is the best that can be said for him. There are few men capable of resisting such a reverse of fortune, and those who love glory are still more affected by it than others, and consequently sooner lose their patience. His present situation demands your pity. I assure you that the ambassador, who knows how to appreciate your goodness, and I, who ought not to be less sensible of it, are not at all alarmed at the evil reports which are circulated in France against us. Both being fortified with the consolation of having nothing to reproach ourselves with, we despise the intimations that are given us, and only think of continuing to do our best, so long as it shall please the King to employ us. The mischief is, that these reports reach Madrid, and give rise to fresh cabals, which may

furnish matter to decry the government, and discourage those who have confidence in the ambassador. If the King sent the Chevalier d'Espennes to some castle, where he would have no communication with any one, perhaps that would silence the others. You know what reasons they have for despising the letters of the ambassador, and what ground they have for attributing to him that impertinent speech about which they talk. It would be difficult to find in all France a more assiduous, estimable, and prudent character. God preserve him in his fatigues both of body and mind, which he endures by accompanying the King, for he would not be easily replaced!

I am very far from deserving your admiration; but I can assure you at least, that it is impossible to be more attentive than I am to the King's service, and to render myself worthy of the kindness and confidence with which you honour me.

The Queen forms an agreeable idea of the excursion by water of the Duchess of Burgundy, as it is a pleasure which cannot be enjoyed in this country, there being no river sufficiently navigable. When his Majesty returns to Madrid, it will be through Valladolid, which he has not yet seen, and Segovia, which he will honour with his presence, to recompense the inhabitants for the courage they displayed in besieging the Portuguese garrison which was in the citadel, and compelling it to surrender, with some traitors, who

had taken refuge there. The Queen has thought for a long time, as she ought to do, respecting her father. All her affection is for her mother the Duchess Royal, whose misfortunes she feels still more sensibly than her own. She received a letter from her some days ago, which cost her many tears. The Marquis de Torcy sends me word, that M. Léganez has obtained permission to reside at Vincennes. In the name of heaven, why is this man considered as innocent? I look upon him as highly criminal; and if no proofs of it have been found amongst his papers, it is because they were examined by two men entirely devoted to the enemy, who remained in Madrid when the King left it, notwithstanding the orders they received to accompany him. They had the confidence of the Portuguese, and as soon as the King's troops approached Madrid, they betook themselves to flight, and their houses were the first that were pillaged by the people.

The Countess de Palma, the intimate friend of the Marquis de Léganez, and his adviser, received numerous proofs of the Portuguese general's confidence in Madrid. I think now my letter of an extraordinary length, and only fear trespassing upon your patience, but I should have made this reflection sooner if I had felt less pleasure in writing to you, and if the time devoted to this occupation were not the most agreeable I pass, especially in these melancholy times.

LETTER XLVII.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, August 19th, 1706.

I HAD the honour of writing to you, a week ago, such a long and perhaps tiresome letter, that I shall be a little more considerate to-day, although I take a real pleasure in conferring with you, and much more in reading the most agreeable and consoling letters in the world, when you honour me with yours. M. Amelot has given me one for you, to testify how much he is affected by all your kindnesses, which I have made him acquainted with, being too sincere a friend of his, not to let him know that he has in you a kind and generous patroness. He and myself have great need of you, our common enemies abusing us so unmercifully as they do, and I presume without the least reason. It is, however, certainly very prejudicial to the King's service, thus to discredit the minister, and a female who has the honour to possess the confidence of their Catholic Majesties, which the grandees, who do not desire them for sovereigns, see with much impatience; for these gentry well know that the ambassador and myself, being so

united as we are, will neglect nothing to render his Catholic Majesty absolute. It would be desirable, were it possible, that the King should bestow some new mark of his favour on the ambassador, as a means of neutralizing the ridiculous reports which are circulated with so much malignity, and which notwithstanding, deceive a great many persons. This is speaking candidly to you, and with that freedom which you have allowed me, and I do it the more cordially, as it is for a person who certainly merits the favour of his sovereign. Remember that M. Amelot is generally useful, and if a negociation of peace were in question, I do not know where you would find a person better qualified than he is. His head and heart are equally good, without any self-conceit, and without being over ardent, except in the service of our great King. In short, Madam, either I deceive myself much, or I have reason to represent him to you with all his rare qualities.

The Queen was delighted to learn that M. de la Feuillade had taken the covered way of the fortress of Turin, because she thinks it will compel her father to do what he ought long since to have done. As for myself, I consider this conquest so important for the interest of France and the King's glory, that I shall not know where I am for joy when the news is confirmed. Allow me to congratulate you upon it beforehand, knowing that you will not certainly be indifferent

to the event, and being inexpressibly gratified by everything that affords you any satisfaction.

P.S. The Duchess of Maine has done me the honour of writing me very civilly, to congratulate me upon my brother's receiving the cardinal's hat. I take the liberty of sending you two letters, in which I return her my very humble thanks. In one, I give her the title of Serene Highness, but in the other I omit it. The persons whom the King honours with the treatment and honours of foreign Princes are not accustomed, from what I have heard them say themselves, to give the title of Highness to the Princes and Princesses of the blood. For my part, I shall always think myself more honoured in doing what I conceive will be most agreeable to the King. Have the goodness, therefore, and without ceremony, to send whichever of the two letters you think proper. I beg of you likewise to send by one of your footmen, the letter addressed to Marshal de Tessé.

LETTER XLVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, August 26th, 1706.

OUR affairs do not go on so prosperously as we hoped. The Portuguese are still encamped five

leagues from Madrid, between which place and them, the King is posted; and as they are in no want of provisions, it is thought they will remain there a long time, since we are assured that it is not possible to attack them. This position of affairs will perhaps induce the enemy's fleet to come to Lisbon, with the intention of forming a new army, which would penetrate without difficulty as far as Madrid, if we had no other troops to oppose it. As long as this state of uncertainty continues, the Queen cannot leave Burgos: the councils, nevertheless, are already gone; but there are much fewer precautions to take for these gentlemen than for her Majesty. We are going to have the Queen dowager here, and whom it has been thought expedient to remove from Toledo; I think the measure very proper, although I do not know what fresh motives may have occasioned this resolution. The Queen is not yet informed of the footing upon which she is to live with her: she would be company for her Majesty if her conduct was satisfactory, or if reasons had not already existed to punish her. The ambassador will probably inform me of all this before she arrives, for I should be very much embarrassed as to the conduct to be observed with respect to this Princess, if I did not know something more concerning her.

I am delighted that your interview with Marshal de Villeroi has passed off better than you ex-

pected. Being assured as he is of the King's favour, I should despise, were I in his place, all the cabals of the courtiers. His misfortune cannot be imputed to him as a crime, which is enough for him; and on his side, he should not impute it as one to those who wished for a more fortunate general at the head of his Majesty's troops.

May I risk telling you, how much I have laughed at the information which has been given you against me? Will you not think that I wish to conceal my evil intentions by this artifice, or that I am too much accustomed to crime to have any compunction at having the iniquity of which I am capable published? After having deceived the Queen, to whom I have boldly made a confidence of this discovery, I may, it should appear, hope to impose on your simplicity; besides, temerity is the soul of great enterprise, and a quality which in general has crowned with success those whom we call illustrious scoundrels, and whom I should regard as my models. I will tell you therefore, the better to deceive you, that I do not remember ever to have laughed so much in all my life, nor to have seen the Queen laugh so heartily; that I reperuse this passage to amuse her when our affairs afflict me; and that if I knew the goodnatured persons, who exercise their penetration so much to serve you, I would most earnestly thank them for being so attentive to your preservation. The hazards which they run of your

not thinking them capable of executing themselves the horrors which they invent, doubtless deserve the honour of your favours. For my part, I admire them as able politicians, who have no scruples of conscience, and I should willingly consult them, to teach me how to get rid of some, which have not yet permitted me to make use of the poison which I have had so long by me. Their manner of thinking, assures me that I should profit much from their lessons, of which I feel that I stand in great need, in order to rid myself of certain very troublesome qualms in the execution of so rational and glorious a project. I do not, however, advise you to let me know them, as your ruin would not do me so much honour were you yourself the instrument of it; and my heart well considered, which harbours only guilt, would not submit to be induced by another to the commission of an action which ought to be my own master-piece. To view the thing, however, in another light, permit me to ask you, Madam, how long people have been so wicked in France? I learn something every day that excites my admiration and astonishment. However wicked I may be, I think myself really but a poor scholar, compared to our great masters, and I shall live a long time yet before I know all the depravity of the human heart. Happy is she who is not in such an enviable station! But happier still is she who can depend upon a friend as tried as you, so

superior to all the false impressions which the most insidious and busy calumny is capable of producing! With this treasure, I despise all the alloy, and think only of meriting, by a candour equal to your own, the good opinion with which you honour me.

P.S. I have known for a long time the great value of the Countess de Caylus, and I am delighted to be indebted to so amiable a friend, for the interest which you assure me she takes in my welfare. I postpone to the next post, what I have to say respecting the Duke of Alba and his lady. Meanwhile, I give you many thanks for your civilities to them. I shall abstain for the future from apologizing to you for troubling you with my commissions, as you receive them in a manner which imposes silence upon me.

LETTER XLIX.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, August 31st, 1706.

A COURIER has just arrived here, whom M. Amelot is dispatching to the court, and who is only detained by the Queen, that she may write herself

to the Duchess of Burgundy; therefore I have only time to send a few lines, which will indemnify you for the two last posts, when I gave myself such unbounded licence at the risk of exhausting your patience, and perhaps of being scolded for it.

The ambassador doubtless communicates to the King, the two trifling advantages which his Catholic Majesty's troops have gained over the enemy, but which, nevertheless, have put ours in better spirits. He has moreover assured me, that within a month, the Portuguese army has lost five thousand men, which is a considerable number; however something more decisive is desirable, and which would compel the enemy to evacuate Castile. Our general will probably embrace the opportunity, should it present itself. The King of Spain longs for it, for he appears to me to be fonder of battles, which he calls the finest things in the world, than he is of the Queen, although that is saying a great deal, for I think him more uxorious of this Princess than the Duke of Burgundy is of yours. We shall not be troubled, thank God, with the Queen dowager in this city, which is a great relief to us. It is said that her Majesty has no wish to pass through large cities, fearing perhaps, lest the people, by whom she is not liked, might not receive her with proper demonstrations of joy, whilst they bestow so many benedictions on Philip V. and his Queen. We learn that she has made several difficulties upon the road, which

will not be in her favour. The Queen of Spain does not yet know the particulars of what she has done to oblige the King of Spain to remove her. It is easy to know generally that Toledo was an improper place for her, if her intentions were bad. It is always desirable that persons of her rank were incapable of committing faults which oblige the adoption of violent measures ; but the wearing of a crown does not ensure perfection. I have not however discovered any other defect in my admirable Queen, but that of having too much kindness for me, which I excuse in her: excuse me also, Madam, the extreme affection I have for you, for I protest that I neither can nor will correct myself of it.

P.S. Here is a fine scrawl!

LETTER L.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, September 9th, 1706.

YOUR letter, dated Meudon, on the 23rd ultimo, informs me, that the King's excursion to Fontainebleau is postponed because the physicians were afraid lest the Duchess of Burgundy, who was to be of the party, should suffer by it. The ease with

which she has submitted to this privation of visiting a place where she proposed amusing herself, is a fresh proof of her sweet disposition and good sense; nor is it less praiseworthy at her age to enjoy pleasures, and to know how to refrain from them. This Princess and the Queen, her sister, for whom you and I have so great an attachment, do us indeed much honour, for it appears that providence has placed them in the first stations on earth to be ornaments to them. Yours is surrounded by a magnificent court, where every one is anxious to please her, and to procure amusements suited to the seasons and the places which she visits. Mine is in the midst of a saturnine people, who would wish to see her secluded from morn till night, except visiting some gloomy convents. She is far from living splendidly, often wanting the necessary comforts of life, and never having it in her power to make any sacrifice for the gratification of her own pleasures, all which she feels, though without suffering it to make her unhappy. The Duchess of Burgundy is sensible of her happiness, without being too much attached to what should be regarded as the favours of fortune, who is a fickle goddess: each adopts the wisest course, and this is a great comfort for us who wish them to be so perfect. The King of Spain has not yet decided when to send for the Queen to Madrid, the enemy being yet too near to make it safe, because if any misfortune happens, his Majesty

will be obliged to leave it a second time, with a shoe on one foot and the other bare, as had been often predicted to us by Marshal de Tessé.

If Marshal Berwick does not find an opportunity of attacking the Portuguese, which would be very disastrous, there is reason to believe that we shall pass the winter here with a very small society, nearly all the ladies who had accompanied the Queen having returned to Madrid, notwithstanding the dread they have of being in a place so near the enemy, and where there are yet so many ill-disposed subjects. It is impossible to describe their infatuation for this city, which is certainly one of the most disagreeable I have seen: they even seem to like the dust and the stench, which are excessive at all seasons. I hope that the Duke and Duchess of Alba will have got rid of this taste in France, if they had taken it with them there. I am very glad to hear that they make themselves beloved and esteemed at court and in Paris, by their splendid and hospitable style of living. I have not failed to show your letters describing it to their Majesties, in order that they might hear of the noble conduct of the ambassador and his lady, and how honourable they support their character. It afforded them pleasure, and I doubt not but the King will bestow marks of his generosity on them. I entreat you very humbly to learn of the King what he should deem suitable for the Duke of Alba, as I am persuaded the King of

Spain will not be averse, but on the contrary cheerfully give proofs of his goodness to a subject of the Duke's birth and zeal. The ambassador has always appeared to me very well disposed towards him; and for my own part, I assure you, Madam, that I shall have great pleasure in being able to contribute everything in my power to his satisfaction. M. Orry writes to tell me that he had the honour of an interview with you, and that he would tell me of all the civilities which he had experienced from you, but which I do not think he will do quite so soon. M. Amelot having thought it necessary that he should not return at present, it will no longer be on my account if he does so at all; I applied for him when I was in France, because I was alone in a position to speak upon that subject. At present, the ambassador is better informed than I am respecting Spanish affairs, and he can judge whether M. Orry's presence be necessary here or not: he has sometimes told me, that without him it would have been impossible to transact business either in our financial operations or many other measures. I have already entreated him several times since my arrival at Burgos, to reflect seriously on the subject, and not to consider me at all in the way in so important an affair, in which I can have no other interest but that of the two Kings. After these precautions, it would be very wrong still to persist in attributing to me any irregularities of which M. Orry might be the cause,

if it be true that his presence or his manners are equally displeasing, as is said, to the good and bad servants of his Catholic Majesty. Such are my real sentiments, which I could wish to make public, in order to be in peace on that head. I am sure that Marshal de Villeroi will be satisfied with the course I adopt, if you will inform him of it. I am delighted to hear of the right understanding there is between you : he was probably in a good humour when he threatened you with me, for it does not appear to me that I am calculated to excite fear, since so many persons of every description attack me so freely and on every occasion. Nothing is better calculated to console me for it than the continuance of your valuable friendship.

P.S. I forgot to tell you, that I understand nothing of the confusion that you complain of in my letter ; as my secretary assures me that he has copied it faithfully, I know not whence it arises. The truth, however, is, that many letters are lost in France ; I will accuse no one of too much curiosity, not wishing to charge my conscience with having perhaps formed rash opinions.

LETTER LI.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, September 16th, 1706.

I RE-OPEN my packet, which was quite ready to go by the ordinary courier, who usually passes through this city in the evening; but the ambassador having ordered him to make the best of his way to Bayonne, he arrived here at six o'clock in the morning, and I did not think proper to awake the Queen or to detain him. My letter consequently remained behind, because I am in the habit of enclosing those which I write to you in her Majesty's packet, for the Duchess of Burgundy. I have received yours of the 5th instant, to which I will reply.

I am no more apprehensive than yourself of battles, the issue being always doubtful. It was however of such great moment for the King of Spain to vanquish his enemies speedily, that I consider it as a great misfortune that Marshal de Berwick has not found an opportunity of attacking them, commanding such good and well disposed troops as he does. Neither can the good disposition of this general be doubted, who has every

reason to act for the best, but the Spaniards rail at him without bounds; they are not easily pleased.

I am not less impatient than yourself, Madam, to learn what point the fleet will make a descent upon, which may do so much injury; but I confess I am still more anxious about Turin, since you wrote to me that the Duke of Orleans and Prince Eugene are there. If an action takes place, one cannot help fearing for the person of his Royal Highness, as he is a young Prince of daring courage. It is to be hoped that we shall not always be so unfortunate. Permit me to ask you, what prevents you from seeing Marshal de Villeroi, who is in attendance at court? Nothing would be better calculated, I should think, than a charming conversation like yours to dissipate the sadness with which he is reproached by the courtiers, as well as his gaiety. If his aunt, the lady of Marshal de la Mailleray, knew of it, she would doubtless ask, what kind of a face is one to put on at court? as she said of two women, who were the objects of some jokes, because one had a nose a little too long, and the other's was a little too short! Indeed it is very embarrassing how to act; and it appears to me, that, having so short a time to live as we have, we should not take a pleasure in tormenting one another, if only because it abridges our existence; it would surely be better to live in peace and harmony.

The residence at Burgos is extremely disagreeable, as there is scarcely anybody here. However, as the queen, thank God, interferes with nothing whatever, one cannot fail to enjoy an agreeable tranquillity, and I candidly confess to you, that I look upon our return to Madrid as a burthen upon my mind.

The Duke de Gramont tells me, he had represented to the court that he did not think it proper for the Queen dowager to remain longer at Toledo, and that he thought I should do well to expose its inconveniences. My answer was to be permitted not to meddle with affairs which did not concern me, and that I left this to his own prudence. I think myself under the necessity of telling you, Madam, that this governor is very attentive as to all that concerns Spain.

I should have much more to say in reply to your last letter of the 5th instant, but as it is not very pressing, I postpone it for the next courier, having had several letters to write to-day to Italy. Cardinal de la Tremoille writes to say, that all is very tranquil at Naples, that fidelity to the King is unshaken, and that it is only an irresistible force, when there are no troops to oppose it, which can cause an insurrection in that kingdom; thank God it is the same with Sicily, and the Marquis de Bedmar discharges his duty equally well there. My brother is not so well satisfied with the composition of the Roman court, which

the capture of Turin, because they are
sive, he says, of the united power of
great Kings. I could wish it to appear
ple enough to all Europe, so as to let us
ace; but unfortunately their dread of it
pires them with a desire to destroy our
As I know of what importance it is for the
service, that the French minister at Rome
act in concert with that of Spain, it was a
ant object on which I talked with my
and found him much disposed to agree
e; he has a natural suavity of mind well
ed to conciliate that of others: and he
oreover assured me, that the Duke
n, Cardinal del Giudice, and himself, are
fectly good understanding, at which I am

opposing the fury of our enemies, which the ambassadors at Rome always find in every quarter. Cardinal Janson has written to me in the most obliging manner respecting the Chevalier d'Espennes, expressing his abhorrence of the infamy of his proceedings towards me. I am persuaded that he thinks him a monster as well as you do, and that it was to be wished he were only a madman: I have answered him as it was my duty, with grateful emotions. Enclosed is a letter to my friend, Madame de Caylus, and I will make no apology for the liberty I take, since I will not offend you, and with you it ought not to be repeated. I only find two courses to adopt, which are either to poison you or to love you passionately, and to this moment I have persisted in the latter.

LETTER LII.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, September 23d, 1706.

THE letter which you wrote to me from Saint Cyr, the 12th instant, grieves me, from the little hope there seems to be of the capture of Turin, and from the unfortunate situation of Flanders,

caused by the recent conquest of our enemies. M. de Vendome judged rather from his ardent zeal for the cause of our Kings, than from its possibility, when he asserted that M. de la Feuillade would make himself master of the fortress which he was besieging, before Prince Eugene had time to form a junction with the Duke of Savoy, since the very reverse has taken place; but however able a general he may be, I am not surprised that he could not precisely foretell a distant event, the contingencies of which, could not consequently be foreseen, and which sometimes alter the best laid plans. This should not, however, discourage, since the Prince de Vaudemont has lately assured me that our troops are yet greatly superior in quantity and quality, and with so great a Prince at their head, who only pants for glory, as well as Marshal de Marsin, who serves under him.

I could wish to alleviate your anxiety by sending some agreeable news respecting our unfortunate Spain, but I have not that consolation. It is true, the Archduke is returning to Valencia, from what they write; and that he leaves Castile free on that side, whilst five or six thousand Portuguese, who were on the side of Salamanca, have made themselves masters of that town. They have burnt several churches, and not content with such a sacrilege to satiate their fury, the monks of a convent of the order of Saint Jerome

have all been butchered. The convent was without the city walls, and they had signalised themselves by their fidelity to their lawful sovereign, whilst so many others commit acts unworthy of the cloth which they wear. I confess that this barbarous event pierces me to the heart, and the Queen, who has just been informed of all the circumstances, is greatly affected by it, for her excellent disposition renders her infinitely susceptible of painful emotions when good subjects are so cruelly treated. All the particulars of this detestable expedition have not yet transpired. I shall reply by the first opportunity, to some passages of your letter of the 12th, and especially those relative to M. Orry. I assure you in the meantime that M. Amelot and myself shall not experience any interruption in our friendship. I have great apprehensions on the subject of our return to Madrid; for although I should be very glad to see their Catholic Majesties there, and more particularly for my own gratification to enjoy the valuable conversation of the ambassador, yet it becomes unsupportable to me when he talks on public bussiness, being always afraid of deceiving me, and knowing besides that it is disagreeable to me, it being impossible that in the end one should not incur the hatred of people who are only anxious for confusion, and who avoid more than death itself their dependance upon a Prince whom they ought to obey.

I entreat you, Madam, to be careful of your health, as the air of Fontainebleau does not agree with you, and I could therefore have wished that the King had not gone there, and left the Duchess of Burgundy. I can easily conceive how gratifying it is to see and to live with this amiable Princess.

LETTER LIII.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, September 30th, 1706.

I HAVE received no letters from you, Madam, by the last courier, and can but too easily imagine the cause. You have just learnt what has taken place at Turin between the two armies, and I conceive that such a misfortune will have only allowed you leisure to witness the chagrin which the King and the Duchess of Burgundy have experienced from it, and consequently to do your utmost in persuading them to take care of their valuable health. This is indeed a principal object, as there may be remedies for all the freaks of fortune, who will at length be tired of tormenting us; and the deity, after having so powerfully exercised the resignation of our Kings to his divine decrees, will one

day recompense their virtue, and show his power by changing everything, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye in our favour. Let us then take courage, and think of the means of discovering human remedies to cure the disorders with which France and Spain are afflicted.

It is happy for us that the enemy's fleet has returned into port, as it gives us breathing time, and a hope that the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily will not probably revolt. The victory obtained by M. de Médauid insures in some measure the safety of Milan, if it is true, as is believed, that the King's army in Italy is still superior to that of the enemy. However, we know no particulars of this battle, except that the Duke of Orleans fought like a hero, was wounded, but not dangerously, and that poor Marshal de Marsin was killed, as well as many other officers of distinction. Who would ever have thought that the Marshal, as animated and brave as he was, would have adopted so imprudent a step, against the opinion, as it is said, of his Royal Highness? In truth, Madam, men are incomprehensible beings, and I am not astonished at its being so difficult to make good choices, since notwithstanding human prudence, we are not the less liable to be deceived. We have need of all the ability and zeal which the Prince de Vaudemont shows on every occasion to oppose the enterprises of Prince Eugene against the districts which he commands. Do not forget, if you please,

how this governor has been unreasonably suspected. I remember while their Majesties were at Barcelona, that they were quite upon the alert to persuade his Majesty to recall him. This originated in the intrigues of the grandees, which took its rise from the jealousy they entertained of him, and certain Frenchmen whom their Majesties had then near their persons; and these grandees, in an insidious and surreptitious manner, caused reports to return by different channels, which they had originally sent themselves, but which they dared not publish. I only tell you this to put you more upon your guard than ever against what is said and written. The Queen and myself interfere with nothing; therefore her Majesty ought neither to be blamed nor praised for the present acts of the King and his council. Farewell, Madam. Would to God, that it were always the same! we should certainly be more happy for it.

LETTER LIV.**TO THE SAME.**

Burgos, October 7th, 1706.

NEITHER the Queen or myself had known anything, but the general account of the unhappy

affair at Turin, and it is you, Madam, who have given us the particulars. You had well foreseen all the dangers to which the Duke of Orleans would expose himself, and he has not only merited admiration by his courage, but by his judgment, since he has thought like a great captain as well as acted like a hero. It is a real misfortune that poor Marshal de Marsin differed in opinion with his Royal Highness in this affair; but who could have foreseen it in a general who possessed so much genius and experience in the art of war? If our army could have withdrawn to the Milanese, as you truly observe, this evil might not have been irreparable, and we might have hoped to have preserved that district, and to be still as strong as the enemy. God has ordered it differently, and we must submit to his dispensations. It is a species of consolation that M. de Médauid has afforded us by destroying the corps which the Prince of Hesse commanded, and preserving, perhaps, by that means the frontier fortresses long enough to give the King's army time to regain them. The Prince de Vaudemont has only to give precise orders on this subject.

I have no difficulty in believing M. de Chamillard's grief, for his sensibility suffers a variety of attacks, and I pity him sincerely. I am very sorry that Marshal de Villeroi and he are not upon good terms, for several reasons, but principally because you are their mutual friend, and it must

be very disagreeable to you. I doubt not but that there are malignant people, who take a pleasure in aggravating their misunderstanding, as there are always too many such in courts, and who do mischief enough for this world as well as the next.

The Queen only waits for the final orders of the King to return to Madrid, where you will learn that his Majesty has been received with great acclamations by his subjects. I assure you I shall quit Burgos with regret; for though it affords few amusements, we lead a regular life, which is not without a sort of charm; whereas we are going to a city full of malcontents, and others who will make unreasonable requests, which will perplex my brain from morning till night, without being able or willing to satisfy them. I shall there find the ambassador, whom I shall be truly glad to see again. I wrote to him once more yesterday, that if he could find among the subjects of his Catholic Majesty, or those of other kings, any one who could serve our King better, or even as well as M. Orry has done, I thought he should not hesitate a moment in letting him remain in France; that he knew his defects as well as myself, and also his good qualities, and it was for him absolutely to decide. I added that he would be so much the better able to do this, as he himself is acquainted with financial subjects, and suitable persons, for certain details in the war department; but that for my part, I understood neither, and that if I only

consulted my own ease, I should prefer M. Orry's never returning to Spain. I speak as I think, and I think very sincerely; for as I have written to you, everything being in confusion in this country when M. Amelot came here, I believed the absolute necessity of the case required me to inform him that there was a M. Orry, possessed of mind and intelligence, in order that he might mention him to the ambassador. But after this step on my part, it was for him to keep or change him as he thought proper, for I would be no longer responsible for the conduct of M. Orry, which had then become solely the affair of the ambassador.

Nothing can be more obliging than all you relate to me respecting the Duke of Alba; but since you are not pleased to say what would suit him, and meet his approbation, M. Amelot and I must endeavour to find a situation proper for so good a subject as he is, and to gratify whom their Majesties will be exceedingly happy.

You speak to me of a Mademoiselle d'Aumale, who acts as your secretary, but I know nothing of her, although her name is the same as that of a very amiable Queen, who greatly honoured me by her friendship. I have imagined that this lady, who is a stranger to me, is also amiable, and am obliged to her for writing the most charming things under your dictation, for which you will be kind enough to return my thanks. If I wished to offer you as many as I owe you, I should find myself

much embarrassed, and shall therefore refrain from it, and be satisfied with the warmest emotions of a grateful heart.

You were not alone in wishing for a battle in this country, for the people, who desire only the public welfare, without any policy, ardently wished for it; the troops also, as we are informed, burned for it, and the confidence they had of vanquishing the Portuguese, the greatest part of whom are raw and bad soldiers, was a very favourable omen for believing they would have beaten them; such a desirable event would certainly have improved our situation, by having a reanimating effect on everything; but we must conclude that Marshal de Berwick could not do it with prudence, for in other respects, the two nations are agreed that it entirely depended upon him, our young King, at the same time ardently desiring it. It is said that Cuenca is about to be besieged; it has a garrison of two thousand men: the result is doubtful, but apparently M. de Berwick does not think so, since he undertakes it.

I find that Cardinal de la Tremouille is very much in the right for wishing another ambassador to be sent to Rome, for our Italian affairs are of a very momentous nature; and I am much obliged to him for the suggestion, since two heads are not too many for a court like that of Rome, in which a false step cannot be made without serious consequences, because of the powerful party which

we have to oppose there. The difficulty would be in the choice, nothing appearing to be more difficult, for I always bear in mind the discussion which the King was pleased to enter into before you and me respecting persons who might have pretensions to fulfil embassies. Cardinal de Janson is certainly very happy in having got rid of this burden, and in enjoying his labours under the best master in the world, who has justly recompensed his fidelity and indefatigable zeal in the service of his Majesty. As I have always very much honoured this cardinal, and we have lived in perfect amity, I should have been sensibly afflicted if the affair of his relation had lessened him in his good opinion. The tie of relationship is great, but it is much relaxed in a worthy man when his kindred commit actions beneath them. I think that his Eminence will have received an answer, which I sent him, and which I trust will be satisfactory. I could wish to know if you have received a letter, which I took the liberty of addressing you for Marshal de Tessé, about six weeks ago. I have not heard of Marshal de Villeroy since the letter which you know of. This is already too long, since it contains nothing which can afford you consolation, for it is none to you to participate, as sensibly as I do, in all your sorrows, which I could earnestly wish to diminish by taking the greatest part of the burden upon myself, as I always fear the effect upon your

health, which is infinitely dearer to me than I can express.

P.S. The King is admirable in everything, and I always represent him as he is, in order to do him justice and cause him to be loved. I am highly satisfied with the care which the Duchess of Burgundy takes of her health: the Queen takes much merit to herself on this account.

LETTER LV.

TO THE SAME.

Burgos, October 13th, 1706.

I ONLY received your favour of the 19th ultimo two days ago, because the packet containing it went to Madrid and was forwarded here. It gave me pain not to find by the same post, some token of your remembrance, as I was apprehensive it might be owing to sickness, for I always fear lest our misfortunes should have that effect upon you, and I imagined that the defeat at Turin had prevented you from thinking of anything else than the just chagrin of the King. I admire, with you, his heroic courage in sustaining with the same equanimity and constancy such deplorable events,

which are sufficient to depress the greatest minds. The more this monarch shows himself superior to others in every respect, the more we suffer to see him experience such great misfortunes, and we could wish to do everything in our power to diminish them, but wishes are vain! I order prayers to be put up for him by those whom I consider the most devout characters; and their Majesties certainly pray sincerely for him, in order that it may please God to preserve a grandfather, whom they affectionately love, and whom they know makes such efforts to maintain them upon the throne on which he has placed them.

The Duke de Gramont has written to me to say, that the Duke of Savoy had taken Casal, and made the garrison prisoners of war; that the whole of the army of the Duke of Orleans was on the side of Pignerol; that it was no longer able to march; that Prince de Vaudemont had quitted Milan to form a junction with M. de Médavid, in order to prevent the enemy from passing a river; that Ath had surrendered, and that another siege was spoken of in Flanders. This series of misfortunes is indeed heart-breaking; however, God may change everything in a moment, as we have a thousand instances, ancient and modern, of princes, whose empires appeared to be in a worse state than those of our two Kings, as was the case with the last Emperor, who was on the brink of ruin. Why should not we have the consolation

of seeing our affairs wear a better aspect? By submitting entirely to the will of him on whom all depend, we should hope that he will treat us like a kind father, and that after having made us feel the effects of his justice, he will let us enjoy those of his goodness. In short, the preservation of the King, and that of a friend so necessary as you, is of the first importance. I flatter myself that the Duchess of Burgundy will happily bring into the world a Prince, that the Queen will follow her example by becoming pregnant, and that in other respects all is not lost. We set out for Madrid to-morrow, passing through Valladolid, Segovia, and the Escorial, where we shall be met by the King and M. Amelot. Their Majesties will have been separated from each other eight months, except nine days, when they were together at Madrid, on returning from Catalonia. Words cannot express the joy of their again meeting, knowing, as I do, how much they love each other, and their mutual confidence. If I can meet with couriers or posts upon the road which we shall take, I will inform you of what occurs in this journey, and give you my opinion of Valladolid, which was formerly a royal residence, and which is asserted to be nearly as agreeable a city as Madrid.

The Duke de Gramont, doubtless, sends the King an account of the Spanish court which he has at Bayonne, and with which he appears delighted.

He informs me that the Queen is extremely well disposed, being anxious to give satisfaction to the two Kings by her conduct in every respect; that she is gracious and polite in the extreme; that she behaves with the greatest civility to his lady and himself, and that she agrees very well with the Duchess; which he assures me she has reason to do, for that she is extremely witty; that I may believe it upon his word, because he is an excellent connoisseur in such ware; and that she and himself omit nothing to alleviate the tedium of her Majesty. He has sent me a letter from her to the Queen, and another for myself, which is the second time that she has written to the former, as likewise to the King of Spain, since she has been in France, and these three royal personages have always observed towards each other the proper civilities so suitable on every account. With respect to myself, the Queen dowager has always honoured me with much condescension; she addressed herself to me when she wanted something of the King, her nephew, and I endeavoured to give her satisfaction. She sent me one of her attendants, when I returned to Spain, as far as the frontiers, with a letter expressing her joy at my return. Her Majesty carried her civility for me so far, that when we were at Aranjuez, where she had come to see the King and Queen my mistress, after having embraced them, observing me bearing her train, "Is it not the Princess des Ursins that

I see my dear niece? Permit me to embrace her also, because I infinitely esteem her for her attachment to you. If I had had the happiness to have her with me, I should not have experienced so many disasters." Her Majesty wished that everybody should hear what she said, as she spoke loud enough, in order to make her attentions more marked. I do not know if I should have been able to have served this Princess as usefully as she wished it to be thought; that would, perhaps, be carrying my self-love too far, but I know that La Perlis and myself did not resemble each other in our maxims.

Permit me to ask your advice as to how I shall conduct myself towards the Duchess de Gramont, that is to say, if I shall reply to the advances which I feel she will be disposed to make me for the future. Her husband, when he wishes to speak to me of her, really leers at me. All the French officers who have passed through Burgos, to join Marshal de Berwick, bring me compliments from this lady. You know better than any one else how much I am attached to the lady of Marshal de Noailles, and how much I honour the Marshal and Duchess de Guiche, in short, all who bear the name of Noailles; this is the reason I would not take a step which might displease them. It is then for you, Madam, if you please, to prescribe my conduct in this respect, as I should be sure not to commit myself if I followed your advice,

and were within reach of personally asking it of you, and you were condescending enough to give it to me. I sometimes receive letters from one of the most amiable men I know, and who appears to me to possess all the qualities for creating esteem; I speak of the Duke de Noailles. It is a great pity that they have not been able to send him troops into Roussillon, since he would have doubtless made a considerable diversion in Catalonia, which would have very much embarrassed the Archduke. I expect with extreme impatience letters from France, as I can no longer live without tokens of your friendship, the value of which daily increases, and I could wish to be more deserving of it in other respects, were it possible, than by my gratitude, respect, and real affection for you.

LETTER LVI.

TO THE SAME.

Rosas, October 26th, 1706.

AFTER having experienced much heat, rain, cold, and dust, we are safely arrived within three leagues of Madrid, where their Majesties will dine to-morrow: they will hear mass at Atocha, and pass through the city, in order to give the

people the consolation of seeing them in perfect health. The King gave the Queen the meeting at Segovia, and their joy was inexpressible, the latter running into the street to embrace the former, on his coach stopping before the house that had been prepared for him, which he could not enter. It rained tremendously, and she was quite wet through; but she had the pleasure of embracing him a moment sooner, and she wished to avail herself of it.

The ambassador was in his Majesty's suite, and we were very glad to see each other. You may well suppose he had many things to tell me; but the time was short, for we have been only one day at the Escorial, the whole of which was spent in looking about us. This convent is of a magnificent size, its paintings admirable, as well as the quantity of marbles and gilt bronze which it contains. The church, although beautiful, did not surprise me; it is not without defects; and after seeing Saint Peter's at Rome, one is spoiled for all other churches. The Pantheon, which contains the remains of all the kings from Charles V. inspires awe and respect. I had not the courage to view the spot which contains the remains of Queen Louisa; she is interred in a place appropriated to those who die childless. It is only a year since her body was entire, and I was assured that her features were very visible, which is extraordinary. If this Princess has presented her sufferings to God, as

I believe to be the case, she is a saint; for they were dreadful, and I have no idea of a more unhappy life than that which she experienced.

We also passed through Valladolid. I know not why the kings have quitted this residence for that of Madrid, which is without contradiction the most loathsome in Spain, when they were in a very well situated city, whose exterior appearance is extremely fine, and where they had a tenantable and cheerful palace? What a singular taste they must have had! Throughout the whole of the journey it was impossible for subjects to testify more affection than was done for the Queen. They continually demanded the death of the traitors, and most assuredly those who are not faithful to his Majesty would not be well off in their hands.

I am about to renew my troubles at Madrid, and God grant that I may be able to sustain them! The King of Spain, who has not money wherewith to pay his troops, has found it requisite to make a retrenchment in his household, and has thought that all the Queen's female attendants were not so necessary, as having the means of supporting his soldiers. The ambassador being of the same opinion, his Majesty has caused it to be intimated to them, that he was very sorry the exigencies of the moment did not admit of their returning into the service of her Majesty; but that he would always extend his protection to them when the

opportunity offered. You see whether I am to be blamed for this measure, yet I am sure it will draw upon me a great number of enemies, which I must endeavour to avoid. You will be informed more at length of this innovation by the first courier, for I think that M. Amelot, who is gone to sleep at Madrid, has not had time, and I am also much hurried. I am going to put the Queen to bed, and to despatch my letter directly. I close it with regret. I am in great pain about your fever and your other complaints, as I know them by experience, and principally on my travels. How could it be possible not to have one's blood heated by the life which you and I lead? I pity you still more than myself.

LETTER LVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 27th, 1706.

I WROTE to you yesterday from Rosas, to which place the King and Queen repaired, in order to come to Madrid this morning, after having heard mass at our lady of Atocha, where all the grandees went according to custom. Their Majesties were nearly three hours in going through the city, in

consequence of the crowd who accompanied the carriage, and who loudly vociferated their benedictions. It is very easy to recognize their zeal by these demonstrations of joy; but certainly nothing is more tiresome than all such compliments. However oppressed I may be, I yet find sufficient strength to inform you, that the King has just this moment made a present to the Duke of Alba of a commandery, which was possessed by the grand admiral, and which is worth at least fifteen hundred pistoles a year; and as the revenue is certain, this mark of favour will doubtless give him pleasure. The ambassador having told me that there were some of these vacant commanderies, I said that the Duke of Alba must not be forgotten, which he very much approved, and we have just spoken of it to their Majesties, who granted what we had the honour to represent to them in the most gracious manner. I could wish to lend an assisting hand to things of greater importance in favour of M. and Madame d'Alba, whom I very much esteem; but it would be sufficient to know your friendship for them, to induce me to wish them every prosperity and comfort, too happy if I could more frequently find opportunities of contributing to your pleasure, for truly my heart is attached to you, and there you will supremely reign all my life.

P.S. We have daily good news from Arragon, which is, that his Majesty's troops beat the rebels. I dare not speak to you of Italian affairs. What

then possesses the officers of the army of the
of Orleans, to return to Paris! I can com-
nd nothing of their heads, but that they
r to me much deranged.

LETTER LVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 3rd, 1706.

THOUGHT I should have it in my power to
you by the courier which M. Amelot dis-

say of such a thing? He will be much astonished to have received from the royal family every possible attention, and from the King so much civility, and to have failed in wishing to become acquainted with a person who is honoured by his friendship. You have made a fine blunder, Madam; you will be thought either capricious or vulgar by the Prince, and perhaps both one and the other. Certainly if I had had the honour of being near you, I should have given you no rest on this occasion; and I think I should have obtained my object, as in the case of the Duke and Duchess of Alba, whose presence, thank God, has caused you no harm. I am not surprised to hear the Elector makes himself so agreeable, since he is neither importunate nor importuning; and such a character must suit everybody, though it is seldom accompanied by politeness. I am not at all surprised that he admires the King, as in order to do this, it is merely sufficient to know him by his fame, and all the other great actions which illustrate his life; but I should be extremely astonished if he did not think him the most amiable of men, after having enjoyed the honour of his conversation; and I am persuaded that his greatest enemies, were they near him, would change their opinions of him. If the fortune of war had made the Duke of Savoy prisoner, and he had been conducted into France, I should not have despaired of the King working this miracle in his Royal Highness. What a

source of joy it would have been to our two Princesses, and what a *denouement* of the drama!

The recovery of the Duke of Orleans' health is a great blessing. The Prince de Vaudemont writes to the King of Spain to say, that he hopes soon to be able to re-enter the Milanese at the head of his army. In that case, we might check the career of our enemies, provided the general officers choose for the future to prefer glory to the pleasures of Paris, where you say they wish to entice his Royal Highness, who is not insensible to their enjoyment, but who knows how to refrain when his reputation and the public good are at stake. What then is the matter with our Frenchmen, if what is published respecting the greatest part be true? I no longer recognise them, and am truly grieved. The Duchess of Burgundy has many sources of trouble at once, and I sincerely pity her. However, all her sentiments are so just, that my admiration of her encreases, and I am delighted with her affection for the King, and her friendship for you. If you could not endure me while enjoying the repose of my inactivity, you must be well satisfied when I inform you that since my return to Madrid, I have not had a single moment without having my brain turned. Why do you wish me so much evil, Madam, when I desire you so much good? To revenge myself, I will often give you an account of the tiresome things which I hear, and perhaps at last you will

cry out for quarter, and will be the first to advise me never to listen to public affairs, in order that I may not turn your brain also.

I have received letters from M. Orry, begging me to indicate to him how he should act in order to please their Catholic Majesties. I have replied to him to-day very naturally what I think, and what I have done, of which I enclose you a copy; and I have taken the liberty of writing to the Prince, to enclose my letter to him for M. Orry, because he had intimated that he wished to know upon what footing he was with me. I have lived too long not to know that there would be often great imprudence in telling one's thoughts, but I certainly never affirm to the contrary. I have seldom known a man possessed of a stronger mind than Orry, nor of more daring intrepidity, and such characters are not very common; proper persons for embassies are still more so. Why should those who are called Jansenists, and those of the other party, interfere to prevent you from sending to Rome individuals who are, or are not, of their opinions? Is this still a subject of conversation where you are? It appears to me, that they should postpone their disputes until after the general peace, and then recommence their civil wars, knock off one another's caps, if it should be their pleasure, but now we have more serious matters on hand; and for my own part, I have regarded these parties with so much indifference,

that I have scarcely wished to hear them spoken of, and I always choose my confessors exempt from hatred or friendship for them. I have found one of them here, a pious monk, who had the honour of being confessor to the late Queen Maria Theresa: he is a cordelier, who loves our King with all his heart, and who puts up daily prayers for him. I know by experience the pains that afflict you; they are acute and very disagreeable, therefore I pity you from my soul; however, I should dread still more than you the fever, for it is more dangerous. It is very difficult to avoid indispositions when the blood is continually agitated by mental and bodily afflictions, but it is to be hoped there will be an end of it, although the time will appear to me very long until I know that you are at ease. Mine depends upon yours, for I cannot be happy when you are not so.

P.S. M. de Torcy writes to me very seldom, and I know not for what reason. If you wish to embrace the opportunity of M. Amelot's courier when he returns, it only depends upon yourself.

LETTER LIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 10th, 1707.

OUR hopes are every day better founded respecting the Queen's pregnancy. The King and Queen, who are in general but of one opinion, have a different manner of thinking at present concerning the resolution which the King should come to of putting himself at the head of his troops this campaign, or of remaining at Madrid. The Queen, on the contrary, thinks that having already made so many campaigns, in which he has given such proofs of his courage, and of which nobody can doubt, it would be much better for him no longer to expose himself to the hazards of war, and a thousand others which usually follow in its train; that his residence in the capital would encourage his subjects, and keep them dutiful; that all the councils who have not been accustomed to the inconveniences that were experienced last year, in accompanying his Majesty, wherever he went, will be much more efficient for his service when they shall be at their case at Madrid, than running from village to village, and from camp to camp, through a heat enough to dry up the brains of all the old

PRINCESS DES URSINS.

lords and counsellors; that all the people loudly cry out that they are not careful of the of Philip V. nor of that of the mother, nor of the child of which she is pregnant, by separating them and throwing them into perpetual alarm that it is increasing the expences at a time when money is as necessary as it is scarce; that the presence of the sovereign will prevent peculation and dishonesty in the collection of his revenues and that in short all will run the risk of being ruined if the King is not constantly at the head of affairs which he cannot be upon a campaign; and the ambassador, who is charged with the means of obtaining money, acting in concert with the president of Castile, before whom all that passes with experience great inconveniences, is of the same opinion. The Queen has moreover said, that the King was of the same sentiments as he, and that nobody would dare disapprove of the King's grandson, remaining here, and that it is for him to give the law. Her Majesty leaves it to your wisdom, to make what use you think proper of this confidential communication.

When, then, shall we have the good news of the Duchess of Burgundy's confinement? It is expected with the same impatience as the certainty of the Queen her sister's pregnancy. I am your Madam, to serve and to love.

P.S. Have the goodness, I entreat you, Madam, to forward to Marshal de Villeroy my answer to

respecting a Spaniard whom he has recommended to me, and whom I will do all in my power to serve, as a friend like him cannot have too much attention paid to his wishes. The ambassador is indisposed, and the idea of his illness makes me tremble in our present situation.

LETTER LX.**TO THE SAME.**

Madrid, January 19th, 1707.

I THINK I am in the same transport of joy which I experienced when the ambassador announced to me the news of the happy confinement of the Duchess of Burgundy; nor do I think of this felicitous event but with delight on every account; you will see it followed by several others, and that the King will enjoy the fruit of his virtue and great courage by seeing a change of fortune in his favour. To all appearance, his Majesty will have the satisfaction of seeing a grandson Prince of Asturias, or at least a pretty Princess for a granddaughter, for I have not the least doubt but that the offspring of their Majesties will be well formed and handsome.

All Madrid is persuaded that Spain will have the Prince she has desired for so many years, and if we are so happy as to experience this event, I really apprehend that the greatest part of the good Castilians will become mad with joy! Do not expect, I entreat you, that I can write about any other subject than this, although my letter goes by M. de Torcy's courier. I thought it my duty to inform the Duchess of Savoy of the expected, though uncertain pregnancy of the Queen her daughter, because it would not be so well that her Royal Highness should learn it by public report. I send my letter in the packet of the Duchess of Burgundy, and you will make what use of it you think proper. I thought also, without failing in the respect which I owe the King, to Monseigneur, the Duchess and Duke of Burgundy, that I could presume to testify how feelingly I participate in the joyful emotions of his Majesty and the royal family on the birth of the Prince; and I have addressed my letters to the minister, to be presented by him. I am almost blind with having written so much to-day, and therefore conclude, by begging you very humbly to make my respectful compliments to the Duchess of Burgundy, and saying everything calculated to show my affectionate and respectful attachment to her amiable person.

LETTER LXI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 21st, 1707.

THE letter which you wrote to me, Madam, on the 9th instant, by the ordinary post, confirms the good state of health of the Duchess of Burgundy and Duke of Brittany, for which I thank God with all my heart. You afford great pleasure to the Queen by continuing to send us news of them, as their health is of great importance. I was exceedingly surprized at the death of poor Madame de Montgon, as I thought her likely to live to the age of a hundred. I pity her mother and you, Madam, very much; for the long friendship subsisting between you must make you regret the daughter as much as if she had been your own. The goodness of your heart is felt and esteemed on every occasion, and attaches mine to you with increasing warmth. I take the liberty of addressing you a letter which I could not help writing to Madame d'Heudicourt, although it will renew the grief which I could wish to alleviate; but I have respected her too long not to give her new assurances of it, on a loss which is so

heavy to her. The Queen still continues in the same state with respect to her pregnancy. The president of Castile, the ministers, and many of the best disposed lords, tease me to declare it publicly, assuring me that the news of it would delight everybody, and produce a wonderful effect; but I have not thought it right to follow their advice until more than the two months have elapsed by some days, in order to make sure of the fact. If, unfortunately, her Majesty returned to her natural state, it would create despair, and a thousand silly things would be published, which must be avoided as much as possible; and I think you will not disapprove my conduct on this occasion. The custom here is, when queens are pregnant, for them to proceed in public to Atocha in a sedan, surrounded by all the grandees on foot, which ceremony would greatly delight the people.

You have been well pleased at M. de Médauid's success over the enemy at Soglio, of which we have been informed here by the Marquis de Monteleon. If M. de Rabutin has been as well beaten by the malcontents as we hear, it is a fine commencement of the new year. We only want the King of Sweden to join us to effect a change in the aspect of our affairs. Marshal de Berwick sets out to-morrow on a little tour on the frontiers of Arragon. I never finish but with regret when I have the honour of writing to you.

LETTER LXII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 23d, 1707.

THERE is nothing new to communicate to you respecting the Queen, except it be that her stays incommode her a little, which I begin to loosen; and that her Majesty, who in general does not like high seasoned dishes nor salt food, eats heartily of oysters, which she disliked formerly: whether these are favourable prognostics or not, we shall know the result very soon. The Duke d'Ossuna has sent a courier here with news which requires confirmation: it states that the King of Portugal has been obliged to embark for Galicia, in order to sue for protection of the King of Spain against his brother, who has attempted to usurp his crown, which indeed would be a curious circumstance. This custom of introducing, for some time back, a couple of kings into several kingdoms, appears to me very singular, and does not by any means please me, though such scenes may have a good stage effect; but it must indeed be confessed, that most of the affairs of this world are nothing but real farces, and generally performed with very bad actors.

LETTER LXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 30th, 1707.

It is no longer permitted to doubt of the Queen's pregnancy, without offending the whole faculty, and it is not my intention, for they assure me that her Majesty has all its symptoms, and that the most apparent, which appears to me the strongest, is her increase about the waist; her appetite, which also increases, convinces me still more of the fact. The King spoke of it yesterday to his ministers in

child whom it shall please God to send us, I shall write you the particulars of what strikes me upon this subject, in order that you may have the goodness to communicate them to the King, that his orders and your counsels may be punctually obeyed, without which I am always fearful of committing myself. I will say no more about it to-day, because so many compliments are pouring in every moment, that I am very much fatigued with them, and I wish to take care of myself, for the pleasure of loving and honouring you.

LETTER LXIV.**TO THE SAME.****Madrid, February 4th, 1707.**

THE Duke de Gramont has forwarded me your letter of the 19th ult., Madam, which expresses your impatience to hear of the Queen's pregnancy being confirmed. The Count de Rupelmonde is the bearer of it to the King, and I doubt not but his Majesty has joyfully received the intelligence. Since that time, the Queen continues to go on well, to eat heartily, and she increases in size, so that the physicians have not the least doubt of her

pregnancy. It therefore now becomes necessary to exercise our foresight and precaution for her Majesty, and for the child which it shall please God to send us; and it is no trifling charge for me, to whom this duty is solely confided, their Majesties relying upon my zeal and fidelity. You will doubtless be surprised, that, reasoning with me as they do, upon the choice that is to be made of a governess, we cannot prevail on ourselves to come to a determination. The chief quality of such a person is, in my opinion, fidelity. In general, I am inclined to think that all the widows of grandees who may aspire to this charge, are incapable of a bad action: but it is, as it were, impossible to answer for their intentions, the greatest part of them keeping very much aloof, and being related to grandees whom we have reason to believe attached to the house of Austria. We are not less embarrassed about a nurse. The health of males and females, amongst the nobility as well as the plebeians, being very bad, almost all the children are born with hereditary complaints, and the most modest ladies who pay their court to the Queen are visibly affected with these maladies, calling them by their name with the same indifference as if it were only a trifling headache. The Biscayans appear to me the most healthy of his Majesty's subjects, being less addicted to vice than in the more southern provinces, the cold air of the mountains which they inhabit

rendering them fair, fresh, and robust; they are *los cristianos viejos*, or old christians, whom the Moors did not infect, all pretending to be nobles, and born with natural talents. I have been three or four times in my life in this part of Spain, and I have seen a number of fine, tall, well formed women there, dancing with tambourines. Their milk must give a nourishment which will inspire gaiety in the Prince of Asturias. We must have nothing melancholy in his temperament, at least we must exert our utmost to prevent him from being of an ill-natured disposition. I have had a long conversation to-day with all the faculty, and they are agreed that nurses should be sent for from the country I have just mentioned, or old Castile, bordering upon it: and we are writing to the corregidors, and other persons of my acquaintance, in order that from the present time they may carefully seek for pregnant women of good character; and this is, I imagine, all that is necessary to be done for the present.

The King of Spain wishes that a medical man should attend the Queen in her confinement, thus dispensing with etiquette in that respect; because he thinks that surgeons are more skilful than midwives, who are not reckoned so at Madrid; you will, therefore, Madam, have the goodness to mention it to the King and the Duchess of Burgundy, for probably it will be the person she has employed that will be sent to us. Would it not

be proper that he should come here three months before the Queen has completed her time, since there are many instances of women who have been confined in their seventh month, and in that case it would be wrong if he were not upon the spot? You will be so good as to write me your sentiments upon this subject. There is also another object in which your advice is required: the child's linen, with all the furniture necessary for the Prince or Princess's chamber; as they know nothing about preparing these things in Spain, to whom must I address myself? Will not the Duchess de Beauvilliers, as the lady of the King's governor, think that this object concerns her rather than any one else? Or should it be the good lady of the Marshal de La Motte? I leave this to your option. The Prince or Princess that we expect, and that we ought so ardently to desire, for the tranquillity of the two monarchies, might possibly disappoint our wishes if the Queen should be in a state of agitation, and I foresee that she will not recover from it if the King leaves her to join the army. While on her journey from Burgos, all her attendants witnessed the agitated state of her mind, when a courier was a moment beyond his time in bringing her letters from the King, as she would then post off to meet him, and open the letters with incredible avidity, and change colour as she read the good or bad news which they contained. Tell me, I beg of you, Madam, how it would be possible to

have a tranquil pregnancy in the midst of such anxiety. Would it not be one of the greatest misfortunes that could happen, if any injury should befall her? What despair would their subjects be thrown into, to lose a blessing of which they have been deprived six and forty years! I agree that it is natural for our young King to covet glory; but are not the reasons which I advance, more solid, and especially when his susceptibility for it cannot be doubtful, after the proofs he has given in all the campaigns he has made, of his great courage and intrepidity to face all dangers? He still possesses the same ardour for war, and I cannot blame him. He does his duty too well not to teach me mine, which obliges me again to represent to you all my fears for the Queen, if he leaves her at Madrid. My attentions to her will be redoubled; I must sleep in her room, and wait upon her every day; I must listen to a thousand people, calculated to make me lose all patience; I must be upon the alert to know what is passing at Madrid, where there are many ill-disposed persons, who have been deprived of their offices for their misconduct; and in fine, I must render an account of everything to his Majesty and the ambassador. Is it possible that such a weak head as mine can look after so many different objects? I confess that I do not flatter myself with it, and still less that my health will be equal to the task. I have no assistance either from men or women;

I must always be proceeding at random with these people, and it often happens that one does not know them after a long intercourse. You will own that my situation will be critical, and that if I should be indisposed, the Queen will be much embarrassed. I beg of you, therefore, Madam, to reflect, and think of what is to be done for the best. The ambassador has just come to tell me that there was a dispatch missing from the King to him, which makes him uneasy. I think that at the same time you wrote to me, in answer to what I had communicated to you respecting my hopes of the Queen's pregnancy, and of my fears for her should the King join the army this campaign; for in the two letters which I received by M. de Chamillard's courier, and by the usual post to-day you make no mention of it. I receive letters sometimes from M. de Torcy; therefore it is best to let him act according to his natural impulse; he would be much in the wrong if he was not well disposed towards me. This letter is so long that I should be ashamed of it were it for any one else, but her whose goodness I know, and to whom I am so sincerely attached.

P. S. I shall answer many passages of your letters by the next opportunity.

LETTER LXV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, February 7th, 1707.

I WROTE to you, Madam, a few days ago, by the return of M. de Chamillard's courier. The greatest part of my letter related to the Queen, and my own fears lest her anxiety, whilst the King was with the army, should agitate her frame and prevent her from doing well in her pregnancy, and bringing into the world the infant which is so much wished for. It may be said that she is not the first woman who loves her husband, and who witnesses his departure without fretting; but this reason does not satisfy me; these sort of instances are not a rule, for it may be that her Majesty, possessing more susceptibility than others, is consequently more capable of feeling the impressions of good or bad news, which would be attended with very deplorable consequences. The King cannot dispense with his physician at the army, and those at Madrid being in no repute, how shall we then be able to dispense with him? If his Majesty should be absent when the Queen is confined, who shall prevent the evil disposed from publishing that the Prince or Princess which may

be born is feigned, as was the case with the King of England? It is still more easy for them to obtain credence for this wicked act; because the custom is not, as in other courts, that the grandees and their wives should be present when the Queen is in labour; for here the *camerera mayor* and the necessary attendants are the only witnesses. These reflections, which I have caused to be communicated to Marshal de Berwick and the ambassador, have not failed to strike them, as you will have seen from their communications to the King. There is still another which may have its weight: it is, that M. Amelot, who is the main-spring of all our affairs, and who carries into effect those which require money to pay the troops, will cause everything to go into confusion by his absence, notwithstanding the arrangements he may make previous to his departure. The Spaniards are naturally so slow in all their motions, that it is always necessary to urge them on if you wish them to act. Believe me, Madam, that when once our ambassador loses sight of them, all will go wrong, unless Providence interposes; and I know not whether it be very prudent to leave so many important objects to chance. Murmurings are already heard against the King's determination to abandon the Queen in her present situation. As it is known that he decides upon nothing of importance without the counsel of the King, his grandfather, if anything unpleasant took place during

the King's absence, there are no mischievous stories but what these people are capable of inventing, and they would attribute all to the French, whom they would never forgive; nor would they fail to load me with the iniquity, very justly, as you may perceive. I fear becoming troublesome to you in descanting upon this affair so long, but I have thought it my duty boldly to represent to you the inconveniences which I foresee.

I send you a letter and memorandum for M. de Langlée, the object of which you will perceive. I left his taste still in fashion when I quitted France; but perhaps it is now out of date, since everything changes there. If you think any other person more eligible than he is to execute the order which I give on the Queen's account, you will have the goodness to employ him, and to destroy my letter. I beg of you to let me know your opinion as soon as possible, in order that we may lose no time. The Queen has only one old winter bed, with white and gold hangings, which is very much worn, and a summer one, with plain taffety curtains, which I do not think a country lady, with a yearly income of ten thousand livres, would have in her room. It is not indeed decent to have such a bed for the birth of a Prince, who is destined to make so great a figure in the world as he whom God will give us, for the Spaniards would be ashamed of it. Madame de Montespan will probably take care to give Mademoiselle de

Noailles a better bed, since she gives her diamonds to the value of a hundred thousand franca. I figure to myself her grace in the midst of her pumpkins, cabbages, and precious stones, at which the Queen and myself have laughed most heartily. I think that in the sequel her Majesty will become as good a cook as she is, for she already makes excellent onion soup in her own room; and the beautiful service which the Duchess of Burgundy has given her helps her to make many other good things, which greatly amuse her. It is nothing for the lady of Marshal de Noailles to look after two objects at once; I have so good an opinion of her ingenuity, that I think she would not have been embarrassed to marry her two remaining daughters on the same day that the nuptials of Mademoiselle de Noailles took place. It is very civil of the Duchess de Noailles to have ceded her place to Madame de Gondrin, and very hard in you, Madam, to have suffered it. Although I should offend you a little, I cannot help reproaching you with being one of the worst relations I know. I do not know whether your object in acting thus is to give an example of moderation; there is no fear, however, of your being imitated, for you go to such extremities that the example will never be followed. I do not doubt that the place of poor Madame de Montgon is in great request: if you wish for a person of a great name, clever, witty, and no mischief maker, I

would offer to your notice Madam d'Egmont, whom I know to possess all these qualities. Her husband, it would appear, has experienced some disgust, notwithstanding the manner in which he distinguished himself in the affair of Flanders, which would be made amends for by this favour; but I only say this by way of saying something, for I ought not to give you the least trouble. The Countess d'Egmont is entirely ignorant of my mentioning her to you. Do not you think Madame de la Vieuville, a sweet, well-behaved, and amiable person, and worthy of a place at court? I should be much deceived if this lady lent herself to intrigues, which often disturb your repose.

I mentioned to you that M. de Torcy sometimes corresponds with me; you will make what use you please of my letters, relying entirely on your prudence, although you always represent yourself to me as being much less perfect than what you really are. It must however be owned that you have some defects, which I cannot excuse. I conclude by rendering you many thanks for the assurance you give that the King is satisfied with me, which is indeed of all things the most grateful to my feelings.

LETTER LXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, February 14th, 1707.

WROTE to you a long letter, Madam, last post. This will be shorter, although there are many things upon which I could wish to obtain your approbation; but the Queen, who has had a headache all day, is now going to lie down, and cannot leave her long alone. She has just been for the first time since her pregnancy, and do not pity her for it, although I do not hate her

because the pavement, being very bad, might cause the carriers of the Queen's sedan to fall. These barricades, extending from the palace to the church of Atocha, were painted, and lined with officers and soldiers under arms. There were trumpets and hautboys placed at intervals; all the streets were hung with beautiful tapestry, and the balconies covered with rich carpets of different colours, as well as the windows from top to bottom; there were exhibited at certain stations, silver-plate, mirrors, and pictures, suspended crimson taffeta, which had a very fine effect; several fountains were adorned with statues representing various objects, in the midst of verdure, which had been brought to the spot, and surrounded with flowers. An immense number of people sung the praises of the King and Queen: some wept for joy, and implored heaven that their Majesties might have fifty children, who might outlive the world; others laughed and made ridiculous grimaces; there were some so transported on seeing the Queen, that they carried their folly to the excess of saying they loved her more than God. All the grandees walked round her Majesty; some of them being scarcely able to crawl along, she had the condescension to desire them not to remain with her, but they persisted in accompanying her into the Chapel of the Virgin, where *te deum* was chaunted. The King waited upon her, and gallantly opened the door of her sedan, having preceded her in his

carriage, accompanied by the great officers of his household and guards. Their Majesties returned in the same order, and although this ceremony lasted more than four hours, the Queen did not find herself incommoded by it.

I must not omit telling you, that Marshal de Berwick was also amongst the grandees to pay his court to the Queen. She will not write to the Duchess of Burgundy, nor to you, but orders me to beg you to tell her sister the reason, which is a severe head-ache. You will have received with my last letter a memorandum which I sent to M. de Langlée, and as the letter which I wrote to him was open, you will have seen the purport of its contents. You will find in this, two other memorandums, which describe the size and form of the room destined for the infant to which the Queen may give birth. The aspect is very healthy, which induced me to choose it; and it has another good quality, that of being very near the Queen's apartment, which is a great convenience, foreseeing, as I do, that her Majesty will pass the greatest part of the day there. We are busily employed about getting nurses; be so, if you please, on your part, for the sake of those whom I infinitely revere and respect. M. de Berwick comes to bid me farewell, and I am going to introduce him to their Majesties to take his leave, so I thus conclude.

LETTER LXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, February 22nd, 1707.

As I write to you by a courier that M. Amelot dispatches to France, I shall do it more satisfactorily than usual, and more at my ease. I begin by telling you that, since all the good I wrote to you concerning him, I have received scarcely any more letters from the person whom you know; that those which he wrote to me were by the hand of his secretary, contrary to his usual custom, and very cool. In consequence, however, of my gently reproaching him, he has begun again to humanize himself a little, although I think I still discover that what he writes to me, whether in jest or flattery, is not sincere. I may be deceived, and I wish to be so, since I am not ignorant that paying my court to the King is the way to be very much beloved by those whom he honours with his confidence, and it is this which has thus far induced me to make the first advances.

As for the Duke de Beauvilliers and his lady, they are extremely civil to me, giving me proofs

fo their remembrance on every occasion, and I answer them in the same spirit. I am very much surprised that you have no further intercourse with them; I thought at least that of chess would continue with the Duchess. I think you are perfectly right in saying that there is as much tact in uprightness of conduct as there is in virtue. Falsehood is discovered sooner or later, and more is gained by the justice which the worthy render us, when they once know that we merit their esteem, and which we have only lost whilst they were ignorant of the truth, without reckoning the internal tranquillity we enjoy from not having wished to deceive them. I think you would be very much embarrassed with that natural candour which I know you possess, if in order to accomplish any object, it required trickery and deceit; for the goodness and nobleness of your heart would always shrink from it, and I really believe you would never succeed.

Great obligations are due to the Duchess of Maine for providing recreations in a place where there are so many sources of melancholy. Theatrical amusements are more suitable to the mind of this young Princess than those of gambling, devoting whole nights to it, or of eating and drinking to excess; as to snuff, I do not speak of that practice, though I think it detestable; I cannot therefore suffer snuff to be seen on the pretty nose of Madame de Caylus, and can only account

for her taking it, by thinking that her confessor has prescribed its use to render her less lovely and seductive. I am infinitely obliged to you for having mentioned what the King says respecting her. If she goes to pay her court to the Duchess of Burgundy, like the other ladies of quality when they visit Versailles, she need only make her appearance once to excite jealousy, and will not be there often enough to surmount it. Allow me to tell you, Madam, that if I were in your place, I would beg of the Duchess of Burgundy to make her one of her ladies of honour, as I have such an opinion of the good taste of this Princess, not to doubt for a moment that my friend would have the happiness to please her. Must she, because she is your niece, be deprived of this honour? You will find her truly attached to you; she will be your consolation, because you may confide in her, and she will perfectly understand and speak your sentiments. If you do not adopt this plan, allow me to say, Madam, you will act very wrong; and perhaps you will be such a bad relative as to do nothing for her, and incur my indignation; but you care but little for this. I have not lost the address which you gave me, but do not fail to send me another a little less obscure.

The King and Queen of Spain may be tired of me in vain, and the King no longer wish for my services; I must remain in spite of everything, at least till we have a Prince of Asturias; then

I shall see what their Majesties may require of me, and I of them. It is a little like treating as one crowned head does with another, you will say, but I may speak boldly when I have reason on my side, and the thought of retiring to my Roman palace is a good one, when I have a prospect of death here, to which I should hasten faster than I wished, if I continued a few years longer to undergo greater fatigues than I can describe.

I take the liberty of enclosing you a letter for Madame de Dangeau, and another for Marshal de Boufflers, who, as I am informed, has lost his second son. My heart has plainly told me what are the sentiments which make you desirous that the court should be satisfied with me; I will do all I possibly can to strengthen them in yours, and will even anticipate what I think likely to afford you pleasure. Our great Princess richly deserves to amuse herself this carnival, after having been so long deprived of the amusements so necessary to her age. I am pleased with myself in agreeing with you, in approving of young persons enjoying themselves; and I even carry the sentiment so far as to be unable to endure them, when they manifest insensibility on that point: everything must have its season except melancholy, which ought never to be indulged, as it is the bane of all agreeable occupations; for these reasons, I am convinced that if I were more frequently with you, I should enliven the scene a little, how-

ever dismal the state of things might be. You cannot give me greater satisfaction, than by assuring me that the King and the Duchess of Burgundy do justice to my zeal. His Majesty is great in everything, therefore I am not astonished that he observes civility towards his greatest enemies, a striking proof of superiority, which ought eventually to extinguish their animosity. If they personally knew the monarch, they would blush at not having esteemed the most amiable man living; for my own part, I would not for half the remainder of my days, have missed the honour of conversing with him at your house, for I discovered in him treasures and virtues which are not to be found in all the rest of mankind, and I am almost obliged to my enemies for having compelled me to go to France, since it has given me an intimate knowledge of his character. Cardinal de Noailles is then inexorable respecting the carnival, since he comes with a jubilee to impose penitence. From the disposition which I know he possesses, I think he would not even spare the company of players, of which the Duchess of Maine is the first actress; it would perhaps be well for her to invite him to come and see some of her performances, for I doubt whether he could help being amused by them, and you ought to give her this advice.

It is well that M. de Vendome is full of confidence, and that it is backed by a fine and brave army; it is also fortunate that he and the Elector

suit each other. The fact of Marshal de Villars, fearing nothing on the side of Germany, ought to make us easy in that quarter, and I am glad to hear that the coasts of France are lined with troops and prepared against a descent from the enemy. The Queen and myself are very uneasy about the inflammation of the Duchess of Burgundy: such complaints are painful, and I fear it may postpone the journey to Marly, where I should be glad to hear of her arrival. Her advice will be useful to the Queen in her pregnancy; her Majesty continues to have no other inconvenience than her sick head-ache, which visits her rather oftener, and she also becomes more corpulent.

As I was finishing my letter, the ambassador sent me one of yours, dated at Saint Cyr, on the 16th of January, which had been delayed, as you will perceive; he was anxious about the King's despatch, which he received at the same time. I know not as yet what has caused this delay; but he will inform me this evening. I hasten to answer some passages of the letter in question.

What is required of M. de Chamillard when he sends forth, as you say, well paid armies and provided with all that is necessary? It is rather too much to wish him to guarantee events. I am really distressed to hear of our friend declaring himself so openly against his enemies. Is it possible that their animosity is so bitter as that no one can reconcile them? When the injury is all on

one side, and the guilty person is so blinded as not to know himself, and to own it, a reconciliation is impossible, since he who is in the right, will not agree to an injury which he has not committed; but when the subjects of complaint on both sides may have some foundation, common friends may, it appears to me, terminate the dispute amicably. I cannot believe my friend, who has always been devoted to the King, and who loves his glory, capable of holding any improper language; meanwhile, if you cannot effect a reconciliation, nobody else can certainly do so; for Marshal de Villeroi never speaks of you but as a person whom he admires, respects, and to whom he is absolutely attached, and even advises me (as if I had need of it) to confide in you in every respect.

I am still of opinion that there will be a difficulty in replacing M. Amelot in the situation he fills, and I should consider it as a very great misfortune if his health yielded to his fatigues. The King's goodness, I should hope, will continue him in it; he is truly grateful for the letter with which his Majesty has honoured him; and I am equally so from the interest I take in his welfare.

I should have matter wherewith to make the Duke of Burgundy laugh, at all the questions with which the King, his brother, continues to assail me upon the Queen's situation, and fear lest I shall not be able to refrain from sending him a letter full of them some of these days. I beg of you to

tell him, that I am infinitely sensible of his condescending kindness in an answer which he has been pleased to send me.

You now know all that we stand in need of for the Queen and her infant, and the enquiries that I have directed to be made about nurses. The Queen and myself are continually thinking of a proper person for governess, and to discharge the other offices absolutely necessary for the service of the Prince; there are, perhaps, but few things more difficult to find, and I can think of no other stratagem than to get masses said, that it may please the Lord to inspire their Majesties with what they should do, and afterwards come to such a decision as may appear to them best calculated to insure the object of our wishes.

The Queen has been delighted with the solicitude which you manifest for pregnant women; and I think if she had no other reason for deserving still more your friendship, she would wish always to be so. I assure you, the King will not oppose her wishes.

I think there can be no courtier rash enough to presume upon succeeding the Count de Gramont, who was an original not likely to be imitated, and whose death has not belied his life; for perhaps there was not at the battle of Nordlingen, a hero who despised life more than he despised death. The order which he left his lady on quitting Versailles, was to make known his affection for his

Majesty, since he intimated by that act, a wish to devote his last moments to the King. I think the last thing he wished was, that the Countess should often remind the King of him. I can form a very exact idea of her from the description you gave me; I wrote a letter of condolence to her, and retain the letter which you wrote to me for the Marquis de Brancas; this is so long, that I fear you will at last be tired, but I have always a difficulty in concluding when I write to you: it consoles me so much that I could wish to pass whole days in telling you all I do and think, and what I could wish to do for the future.

I wished to write to Marshal de Villeròi, but I have not had time.

LETTER LXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, February 28th, 1707.

I HAD the honour of informing you, Madam, by one of the ambassador's couriers, that he had received the King's despatch, which had been missing, and that I had also received your letter at the same time; and as I had not leisure to answer it then, I will now endeavour to reply to

the principal passages it contains. One of the most important, is the trouble we shall have in the choice of nurses, and other persons, who should be in attendance upon the Prince that we expect, and whose preservation is so necessary. The physicians and others, who are capable of judging, will decide for those who have the best milk, and pay no attention to the size and countenance, but as a criterion to judge of their strength and good state of health. I have also, as well as yourself, seen small women as good, and even much better, than others whose appearance was more prepossessing. However, between two breasts equally good, one would rather prefer the woman of an engaging appearance than the contrary, and who might besides be disagreeable in other respects. As to the governess, it is a very important point, and it will be extremely difficult to have one, such as we could wish. The widows of the grandees who might aspire to this honour, are already spoken of at court. Their Majesties will have some time yet to decide on the choice they may make; and all possible enquiries will be made to know the mind and heart of her who is to have so considerable a charge; the same circumspection will be exercised in engaging the inferior attendants. A French physician known by M. de Torcy, of whose services he and the other ministers sometimes avail themselves, and whom I saw on my journey to Tolosetto, a small town in

Biscay, and to whom I addressed myself to look out for nurses, asked me if he should go to Saint Jean de Luz, because he thought he could find some good ones in that part of the French frontiers. I answered him, on the part of the King and Queen, that he was not to go out of the Spanish states, because their Majesties would have one of their own subjects, and I think they are right. With respect to the accoucheur, his Majesty writes to the King on the subject; therefore I have nothing to add, except that the greatest part of the women who have had children, suffer many inconveniences afterwards, for the Spanish surgeons are not esteemed even by those of their own nation. I am very glad that the King approves of my idea of employing the Duchess de Beauvilliers to look after the child's linen; I shall follow the advice you gave me, to have a check upon her taste for splendour, as it would be very superfluous at a time like this, when the King of Spain denies himself everything but what is absolutely necessary. I will write to her by the first post, on the part of their Majesties, to request she will merely provide what is necessary for the Queen and Prince, with as much simplicity as possible. I sent you some time ago a letter for M. de Langlée, by which you will have perceived I begged he would order some hangings of blue silk, lightly embroidered for the Queen's bed-room. Her Majesty has since

changed her mind, in consequence of our having found suitable materials for the purpose here, and which are to be accompanied with some good pictures on the walls, so as to give an air of cheerfulness to the apartment. The motive which has given rise to this change of mind, is the little expense attending it. You will therefore have the goodness to let M. de Langlée know that his commission is at an end, and that he may reserve his good offices for some other opportunity. This is all that you will have to-day, from one who would esteem herself the happiest being in the world, if she could pass her life with a friend as rare, amiable, and excellent as you are.

LETTER LXIX.**TO THE SAME.****Madrid, March 6th, 1707.**

I LEARN by your letter of the 20th instant, the surrender of Marshal de Noailles to his son, of his rank as captain of the guards, which cannot be in better hands than his; and my joy would be greater if I could flatter myself with the restoration of his father's health in his retirement from

the service; but I fear, from what you say, lest this may not be the case. No relation or friend of his will regret it more than myself. The King and Queen of Spain were well pleased to hear of the King's goodness to your nephew, and his Catholic Majesty thanks the King, his grandfather, for it, by the letter which he wrote to him to-day. The one I received from the Duchess of Burgundy, this post, has given me infinite pleasure; and although I know that most of her obliging expressions are flatteries, I cannot help being pleased with them. I think, however, that if they came from any other person than this Princess, I should not so much esteem them; I therefore entreat you, Madam, to have the goodness to testify to her my extreme gratitude for her kindness, as well as my real and respectful attachment for her amiable person. She writes to tell me, that I must not expect the confinement of the Queen to pass off so easily the first time as the second. I have asked the meaning of this of ladies who have had several children, and they differ upon the subject; for some say they were more indisposed the second time than the first, and others the reverse; recourse, therefore, must be had to the oracle for a clearer explanation, and mine is our Princess. Have, then, the goodness to ask her what she wished me to understand, or if she thinks that the Queen ought to be bled, after the expiration of four months

and a half of her time, according to the usual custom of most women.

The King has just received news that the Duke of Albuquerque, his Viceroy in the Indies, has sent him a million of crowns by a ship which is soon expected in Spain; appearances are in favour of her safe arrival, and it would be a very useful help till the galleons come, which we are informed had not yet set sail. The Viceroy sends this million beforehand, that his Majesty may have wherewith to pay a part of his troops, which is rendering a great service, and I am so much the more glad of it, since I have always taken the liberty of telling the King, that the Duke's continuance in office was useful to him, although his time had expired, because he has so well discharged his duty, having given him proofs of his fidelity and zeal, at a period when they could not be too highly appreciated. We expect further assistance from the Spanish clergy, which will also be extremely useful to us; the bishops discharge their duty very well; we know them more by their actions than their words, because they almost always reside in their dioceses, and scarcely ever visit court. It would have been desirable that the monks had followed such good examples; they would not, in that case, have done so much injury to this monarchy.

Marshal de Berwick wrote to me on the 2nd of March, that the enemy soon threatened to take

the field, though he wished they would let him have a little breathing time, and wait till he should be strong enough to make head against them. Many people continue to say that the Archduke will march into Catalonia; and if so, that he would find enough to do with the Duke de Noailles, who is on his March to Roussillon; for the Prince had only a small number of troops with him, in order not to weaken the army of Valencia; so that the French general will be able to harass him and make him cut a poor figure at least, if he is not strong enough to fight him.

We are to have Spanish and Italian comedies during the three last days of the carnival. The ambassador, who is, you know, very much unoccupied in this country, went to amuse himself a little at the Duchess de Frias, who had one performed at her house; it is a most attractive amusement for the greater part of the Madrid ladies. The Duchess and the Constable, her husband, pressed M. Amelot so much to go to their house, that he could not refuse; I wish him to give you a description of this entertainment, and the pleasure he experienced on returning home. Some day, when I am disposed for it, I will give you a short account of what is called *Pasmo*, that is to say, of all that the most refined and agreeable sentiment can imagine, to delight persons of good taste, which pastimes are, to say

the truth, of the most tiresome nature, not possessing even the merit of being ridiculous or of exciting laughter, though there is always a display of profusion and magnificence.

The ambassador is much better than he was, and is very well satisfied. The kindnesses of the King produce great effects on everybody, so far even as to make an impression upon their constitutions. Yours will recover new strength should the next campaign be prosperous, and I hope to hear of your being in good health; indeed, I wish for nothing so ardently, since your preservation is as dear to me as my own. I expect to hear from you by M. de Brancas.

P. S. So short a time has elapsed since I wrote to the King, that I would not presume to do so to-day, although I have a thousand thanks to give his Majesty for the attention he has been pleased to pay to my wishes, in granting liberty to the Chevalier d'Espennes; I entreat you, therefore, to be the bearer of my most respectful gratitude; and in order the better to discharge this task, consult rather your heart than your understanding, for it will inform you still better what mine feels on this occasion. My brother proposes to me to beg his Majesty to permit the Chevalier to go to Malta; but this does not appear consistent with the interest of the two Kings. I replied to him, that so mischievous a madman, at full liberty, would give the Spaniards in those countries a

strange notion of the Spanish government, and might, by his false reasonings, shake the fidelity of the Italian subjects of their Majesties; that it is therefore better to give him time to profit by the good advice of his relations, and that when he shall have truly repented of his extravagancies, and Cardinal de Janson, can answer for him, I will do all that his Eminence, whom I infinitely honour, can wish of me. It appears to me that these precautions are quite necessary, with a man who circulated his calumnies with his usual effrontery some days before quitting the Bastile. The Archbishop of Aix was so astonished, that he wrote to me last post to say, it would be a charitable act to examine whether this man were not more mad than wicked.

LETTER LXX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 7th, 1707.

I HAVE a long time hesitated whether to communicate a plan which I have in view, or to decline it altogether; after having well reflected on the subject, I have determined to impart it to you, and to beg you to give me your opinion.

The Queen Dowager applies to the King of Spain for a *mayor domo* in the place of the present, who insists on retiring on account of his advanced age and bodily infirmities, which incapacitate him from serving her any longer. Many of the grandees have been asked, even those who are the most embarrassed in their circumstances, whether they would accept the office, and they have positively declined it, observing that nothing less than a commandery would induce them to go near this Princess. Among the other grandees who have not been sounded, it would be extremely difficult to fix upon any one who would accept the situation, or be calculated for it. Those who are in the council of state, and in the cabinet, will not quit either; the infirm and decrepid could not; and those who are either exiled or suspected would not be eligible, neither would the young; so that it will be difficult to place any person with the Queen capable of fulfilling the charge. This has made me think that her Majesty, being in France, and endeavouring to please, would willingly receive a Frenchman proposed by the King and Queen of Spain, after being made a grandee, and who should possess all the necessary qualifications. M. de Chalais, my brother-in-law, possesses these, and adds to them both virtue and piety, which make him justly loved and respected by all who know him. What would be a great inducement for this Princess to accept of his services, is her

good wishes for me, for she even expresses herself so affectionately on my account, that I am in pain both for her and myself.

All that I have taken the liberty of representing to her upon this subject does not correct her, and she continues in her letters to treat me as if we were companions and on an equality, which I assure you does not at all flatter my vanity, for I wish every one to occupy his proper station. Besides the propriety there is in a woman who has been in a family, to do all the good she can for it, I have a further inducement to wish for that of Chalais, from the friendship which my brother-in-law and my nephew have shown me at all times; and the King and Queen could not confer a greater mark of their condescension on me, than in doing me the favour of granting M. de Chalais a dignity which would extricate his son from the misfortunes that have so long overwhelmed the family name. He would in that case have an advantageous place, and I should have the satisfaction of having a niece of high birth, who might come and pay her court to the Queen and please her better than the greater part of her subjects, who have neither the complaisance nor the manners which are required. This favour would produce no bad effect in Spain, being very natural that it should be given to a *camararamayor*, a description of ladies who are accustomed to obtain such places for their relations and

many others of a different kind. The moderation with which I have used the above privilege, in refraining from ever asking anything of their Majesties for my family, has in no degree raised me in their estimation, but on the contrary, I should have attached to myself persons of importance, if I had fixed my relatives in Spain; because they would have hoped to obtain favours for themselves through me, and I should have been treated with more delicacy than I have been, from the fear of making enemies of my creatures. It would also have produced another good effect, that of cementing by degrees, through intermarriages, the union between the two nations, and of a beginning to extirpate an old and pernicious animosity, which does great harm. I know the repugnance which our King feels to consent to the ranks being increased in his court, and that he has just refused the Duke de Gramont; but this is a very different case, and is a solitary instance of its kind. It would do me honour, because it would then be seen that their Majesties continue to be satisfied with my conduct, which my enemies always wish to calumniate; in short it would be a very desirable thing for me. I shall acquiesce in all that you think proper upon this subject, and I speak to you as to one in whom I place the greatest confidence, and upon whose sense and goodness I have the utmost reliance; do me the honour, therefore, of giving me a fresh proof of them on this occasion,

by granting me your support, if you think it in your power to do so without displeasing the King, for I would rather renounce every advantage than do anything to incur the least diminution of that esteem with which I flatter myself he honours me. If you think that my pretensions are reasonable, I shall apply to you for a wife for my nephew, in order that she may be the dearer to me, as being of your procuring; you have proper persons about you, and you have only to make the choice. The gentleman is twenty-eight years of age, possesses talents, and is free from vice, notwithstanding the corruptions of the age. When I was at Paris, I was offered a pretty heiress, well educated, who will be very rich. I could get him made a grandee. The person to whom I allude is Mademoiselle de Pompadour, niece to the Duchess d'Elbœuf: my reply was, that I did not think of asking favours for my relations from their Catholic Majesties; and indeed I should be still in the same mood, were it not for the favourable opportunity which now presents itself. I address this letter to M. de Chamillard; be pleased to give him the answer to it, and believe me, Madam, more yours than I can describe.

LETTER LXXI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 14th, 1707.

THE reasons I have given you, Madam, why the King of Spain should not take the field this campaign, and which you tell me have prevailed, daily appear better founded. The ambassador is more and more aware of it, from the trouble he takes in giving an impetus to financial operations, without which armies are useless: he told me again yesterday that he perceived every hour, if he had left Madrid to accompany his Majesty, everything would have remained in a state of inactivity, and that there would have been an absolute want of money. He is not deceived, for these people are dreadfully slow, and difficulties are started on the most trifling occasions, so that the assiduity and control of this minister are absolutely necessary. I perfectly agree with you, that it had been desirable for the King, who has always appeared in every part of the country at the head of his troops, to continue so to the end of this war, and follow his natural inclinations in that respect; but, as you justly observe, kings are frequently obliged to sacrifice their personal wishes

for the good of the state, and the virtue of an individual should often be possessed by a Prince. The true glory of ours, after having given so many proofs of his courage, is to preserve his crown, and he ought to neglect nothing to contribute to this object. News is continually flowing in from all parts, which requires prompt answers, and a delay might be very prejudicial to things which are often of consequence; as for instance, were there upon the frontiers, and in the sea-ports, viceroys or governors suspected of corresponding with the enemy, or who did not do their duty, by keeping the people in obedience, or not executing the orders given them, many instances of which we have seen, is it not evident that the time which would be lost in sending information of it to the King, were he forty or fifty leagues from Madrid, might be extremely injurious? Spain must not be considered now as if it did not contain two Kings, for too much vigilance cannot be exercised upon the conduct of all its subjects. It would be a great mistake to flatter ourselves with there being no malcontents. The King has exiled a considerable number, and has deprived them of their situations, to punish them for having joined the Archduke, whom they serve to the best of their ability. A number of grandees have also been sent away from the court as suspicious characters; and recently the Duke del Infantado, who is thought still worse than the others, has been transferred

from Grenada, to which place he had been sent, to the Castle of Segovia, where he will continue a prisoner. All these people cannot help having lacerated feelings, as well as mischievous intentions, and as they are fixed in the different towns, it is to be presumed that they fail not to instil as much disaffection as possible into the minds of the people; they cannot therefore be too closely watched. I do not know whether it would not be better to confine them all in the same place, than to scatter them as they are, since their means of corruption would then be confined to one spot. I have not at all approved of those plans which were decided upon when we were at Burgos, and of which the President of Castile was the principal promoter; but perhaps he had good reasons for them.

As to the Queen of Spain, I cannot consider as a fault her fear of seeing a husband, whom she affectionately loves, exposed to all dangers when with the army; there is not another King who has already run so many risks, and but few Princesses who have been in such awkward situations. The mere idea that some misfortune might happen to his Majesty, is enough to throw the Queen into inconceivable anxiety, and to make her feel that she would herself be lost in losing him; and in reality, what would be her resources in such a case? I have already informed you that her constitution is irritable, that she loves the King passionately, and that her discernment discovers

everything very quickly : do you think, therefore, thus constituted, that it is possible for her not to feel all that happens very acutely ? Her feelings are overpowered by first emotions, when a courier arrives to inform her that the King is about to give battle, or that he has obtained some advantage over the enemy. She will feel less interest in such events when there is only a general concerned, and we shall be more insured against accidents happening to her, than if the King were absent. Allow me to ask you, Madam, if the Queen deserves to be thought less perfect by you, because her sensations are as they ought to be ?

Marshal de Berwick informs us that the enemy has evacuated many towns in the kingdom of Valencia ; that he has embarked his artillery, and that many of his transports have put to sea : his object is not yet known, but it is thought that the Archduke is on his march for Catalonia ; every one reasoning upon this subject according to his fancy, and perhaps with great uncertainty. I consider, however, as an advantage accruing from this circumstance, the time that it gives us to bring up succours. Judging from appearances, the Archduke will be weaker than us, and may find himself much embarrassed, as the Duke de Noailles will be a troublesome neighbour to him. The fortress of Jaca, upon the frontiers of Arragon, has been very seasonably relieved. The

Duke de Gramont has greatly exerted himself, knowing the importance of getting the Prince de Sterclaes, the Viceroy of Navarre, to send troops and provisions there. He has sent me word that his health obliged him to go to Paris, for which I am sorry, as it will be a loss for the King of Spain, because more vigilance could be shown than he has exercised in all that concerns the frontiers of this country; and it requires some influential person to be in Bearn to superintend the passage of troops coming from France. The Queen dowager will doubtless regret his departure, for it is impossible to be better satisfied, she writes to me, than she is, and for his part, he is delighted with her; but he appears to be still more so with his lady, for he praises her to the skies, and assures me that she deserves it. He has already politely sent to tell me, that she wished to write to me to ask for a small share of my friendship; but that she did not presume to do it for fear of importuning me, unless I gave her permission. I answered the Duke as civilly as possible, that I could not enter into this correspondence, not having time to keep up that which I had of the most pressing nature. I fear lest he should not take me at my word, but send me some of his wife's letters, which would embarrass me very much; I am not very nice about such a correspondence, but if he persists, notwithstanding what I have said to him, in wishing the Duchess

to write to me, and I should return no answer, he will mortally hate me. Assist me, therefore, Madam, to avoid this rock, by advising me what to do: he is more uxorious than ever, and thinks there is not a more estimable and charming woman in the world than his Duchess.

You have already seen that for fear of too great an expense, the Queen has changed her opinion as to the furniture which I had desired M. Langlée to get made for her; she will have no tapestry in her chamber when she is confined, under pretence that the season will be very warm, and that the walls are to be hung with pictures.

Would not one say, to hear you talk, Madam, that your relatives are under great obligations to you, and that you do wonders for them? You would be much embarrassed, if I pressed you to tell me what you have done for them, and on what occasion you have departed from that fine maxim of being almost good for nothing to them. I wish, in order to correct you of it, that the King might be the first person to blame you, by forcing upon you favours for your kindred, which you will not ask him for. Whatever inclination I may naturally have to approve your sentiments, I own I cannot excuse those of indifference, which render you almost useless to your family; and the word unjust, which you lay to my charge, for having taken your niece's part against you, would apply better to you than to

me; but I hope the King will revenge me, by declaring my friend, Madame de Caylus, lady of the palace.

I think highly of the Duchess of Burgundy for being fond of a sprightly and gay disposition, as it is not usual for persons of her age to care much about them, considering it enough if they speak, right or wrong, provided they excite laughter; and worthless cutting raillery often usurps the place of merit with young princesses. Once more, Madam, I am delighted that ours has superior discernment, which does not prevent the good heart and sweet disposition of Madame de la Vieuville, joined to wisdom, as I think, at least, from being esteemed. The Duchess of Burgundy acts perfectly right in enjoying the amusements of the carnival, and in adding pleasure to pleasure, provided they do not injure her health, since she has been deprived of them during the whole of her pregnancy, in which her conduct has been most exemplary, and she sees all its good effects. If I were to be believed, the Duke of Burgundy should let her pass another carnival like this; that is to say, she should have relaxation for a year. Do not, however, impart this to the Duke, as I think he would not hear of it with more complacency than the King his brother; for if I were capable of telling him such things, with respect to the Queen, he would not take it, I assure you, for raillery; they

are strange Princes, when their wives are in question. I have scarcely ever seen a complexion which appeared to me so beautiful as that of the Duchess of Burgundy, possessing all the lustre of the hey-day of youth; she has also fine eyes, whose glances penetrate to the heart, especially when she is a little animated, and if she is improved upon what she was when I saw her, I pity her husband very much.

Cardinal de la Tremoille is truly happy that you are pleased to honour and distinguish him by answering his letters. Whatever friendship I may have for him, I will not let him appropriate to himself your kindness, and you will allow me to take the greatest part to my own account. To my mind, I cannot incur too many such obligations, wishing to be more and more indebted to you, because I am entirely devoted to you.

LETTER LXXII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 15th, 1707.

I WROTE you such a long letter, Madam, by the post, that this will be much shorter; I send it by the return of a courier from M. de Portchartrain,

who brought us the information that the money from the Indies had arrived at Brest. His Majesty has given such prudent orders respecting this supply, that the council of the Indies have returned him thanks, and his cabinet ministers have much approved them. It is no trifle to have convinced this nation that she might confide in ours on the present occasion, when commerce is in question, since to this day, the Spaniards have been extremely distrustful, pretending that they have been often deceived by the French, and that they found more good faith among the Dutch and English. It is of inconceivable importance, in the present instance, that we act honourably, and that they become gradually accustomed to place confidence in us, by our giving no ground for suspicion, in order that a solid connection may be for the future and for ever established between the two kingdoms, which will be infinitely advantageous to them both, and consequently very prejudicial to the common enemy. The ambassador writes earnestly upon this subject to M. M. de Portchartrain and Chamillard. It is fortunate that, besides the other excellent qualifications of M. Amelot, he is conversant in commercial affairs, which is one of the principal means of promoting the good of this monarchy. I daily admire his prudence and amiable disposition; but I shall not, by your leave, inform you how I know all this. We hear that the Archduke has left Valencia for Catalonia,

accompanied by his prime minister, guards, the whole family of Count Arossua, and some other wretches, who have been unfaithful to their legitimate sovereign. This news is good, in as much as it must make Marshal de Berwick easy in his mind, which he did not expect to be on his quitting Madrid; for he thought the enemy would not give him time to put his army in order. Apparently that of the enemy is neither strong nor in good condition, since he has taken no steps to attack ours. The Portuguese were very much weakened the last campaign, and they have had no reinforcements; it is asserted that they have but few provisions at Valencia; that they are alarmed on the side of Roussillon and Arragon; and that, to sum up all, they are exceedingly embarrassed. If they are under apprehension from us at present, what will they be if you send us any considerable succours; and what will not the Duke de Berwick be able to do? In short, such fine prospects on that side afford a hope, that the King will absolutely drive his enemies out of these districts. Would to God that we had not more to apprehend on the side of Italy! I cannot think of that quarter without pain; and I am not alone, since I know people who are fearful to the last degree on this subject, and I cannot blame them.

I impatiently expect the Marquis de Brancas, in order to be informed particularly about the state of your health, and the situation of affairs in

general. This is all that I can say to you to-day, and yet it appears to be one on which I love and respect you more than ever.

P. S. I take the liberty of addressing to you a letter for our friend Marshal de Villeroi, whom I learn, in addition to his other misfortunes, is cruelly tormented with the gout: these are too many evils at once, the last of which you cannot cure, but you are the fittest person in the world to alleviate his other sufferings, for I know, from what he writes to me, all the confidence he places in your kindness, the sincere attachment he has for you, and how much he esteems you beyond any other person that he knows.

LETTER LXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 21st, 1707.

SOME days have already elapsed since I sent you by a courier of M. de Pontchartrain, a letter which is contained in the Queen's packet to the Duchess of Burgundy; therefore it will be nearly as recent as this which the post takes to-day. The ambassador has detained this courier, expecting that the Marquis de Brancas would arrive every moment, and that he would answer certain things with which you know he is entrusted, but

on which, with your leave, I shall be silent, because they are too painful. I shall only write to you about the situation of the Queen. Her health continues good, and her shape is spoiled, having lost all its slenderness; her face has not become thinner, and her swellings are rather diminished than increased, though she applies nothing to them. She pleases herself at present with the idea of becoming a mother, and she has candidly owned to me that she should not be sorry to give her child dolls, nor to play at Madame with it; and I have nothing to say against this flattering idea, since her Majesty has no other amusement. You will ask me, Madam, how this can be possible; and my answer is quite ready: except reading, of which she is very fond, she has no other amusing occupation; the ladies who might have the honour of keeping her company, do not come to the palace before five o'clock, and when the weather is warm, it is still later when they leave home, because most of them rise at eleven, dine at two or three o'clock, and then take their siesta; they then come to the Queen's chamber, and after having knecled to kiss her hand, they sit down, the greatest part without speaking. If her Majesty and I did not keep up the conversation as much as possible, it would absolutely drop. If asked whether any of them can dance, sing, play on any instrument, are fond of walking, or play at cards, the answer

is "no"; you will allow, Madam, that it is difficult to make anything of such persons. What they are adepts at, however, is, to be constantly asking favours for themselves, their friends, and dependants; and when they are granted, they say it is but right, and that they could not be refused. It often happens that in returning thanks, they ask for another favour, and when they do not succeed, they complain loudly that the refusal is absolutely against their *punto*. They have, besides this, the good quality of not wishing to occupy themselves in any way: some of them carry chaplets round their necks, with an agnus Dei upon their shoulders, little crosses, several relics, and a rosary in their hands. All these customs may have their merit, but it must be owned that they have not that of being entertaining. I think that the Duchess of Burgundy would pass many melancholy days if she had not more amusement in the court where she is, than the Queen her sister has here. I remain, almost every day that the King hunts, with her Majesty from one o'clock, when her dinner is over, till five, when his Majesty returns: after having taken refreshments he often holds a second council, and then I am again with the Queen. The Count de Saint Estevan, grand master of her household, and the Marquis de Castel Rodrigo, her grand chamberlain, who have the privilege of entering, sometimes interrupt *this tête-à-tête*, and talk to us of the misery of the

times, of which the latter has had too much experience, having lost more than fifty thousand crowns a year in the states of Milan, so that he and many others deserve compassion ; and I own that I greatly pity the Spaniards, whose fidelity to their King is the source of all their misfortunes, having abandoned everything to fulfil their duty. I have not less compassion for the poor Italians, many of whom are here full of the most ardent zeal, and, amongst others, the Duke and Duchess de Popoli. The Duke is captain of the King's guards, and has a blue ribbon : he is a very honest man, attentive to his duty, and tractable. His lady is a fine woman, and shows, as well as her husband, that they have no other will but that of their Majesties, speaking loudly of the obedience which subjects owe to their King, and of the obligations Spaniards are under to France. Such sentiments, which easily obtain publicity, do not meet with the approbation of every one in this country. My style to-day is not over gay, Madam, as you may perceive ; do not think, however, that my courage is depressed. I feel that we must be decided, and accommodate ourselves to times and circumstances. I show myself to you such as I am, and I should be very sorry to use the least disguise with a person whom I have constituted the absolute mistress of my affections, from the deep impressions that her merit has made upon them.

LETTER LXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 28th, 1707.

I HAD little doubt, Madam, of your approving the Queen's change of mind respecting the furniture which she wished to be made in France, and which she would never have thought of had she had any idea of its costing twenty thousand crowns, as you mentioned to me: she thought that being only of embroidered silk, with very little gold or silver, it would never cost so much. I will order pictures to be placed in her room as well as in the Prince's, and I shall have them hung as well as I can, which will not be easy, from their not being made for the rooms intended for them; there will be a want of symmetry. This offends my taste; but as there are many more important things to arrange in this country, I shall not be so much occupied with this trifle as if I had nothing else to think of. It would be impossible, on account of the heat at Madrid, to put up tapestry hangings, and for this reason I had ordered damask. We shall then only want the beds and the remainder of damask, without the tapestry for the child, as I wrote to the Duchess de Beauvilliers, and first to M. de Langlée. I thought that it was to follow the child's linen, and if I have done amiss, be pleased to rectify my mistake, as I should be very sorry to have a

misunderstanding with M. de Langlée, although I esteem him less than Madame de Beauvilliers, whose joy at being employed on a commission for the Queen of Spain is of too high a merit with me not to desire the continuance of her friendship; and what should console M. de Langlée is, that he will not lose his reputation in this country, for I promise him that if ever we are so fortunate as to experience a return of peace and plenty, I will tell him that moment to give full scope to his taste for magnificence, by sending the best that Paris can furnish. You will do very well, Madam, to restrain the liberal hand of the Duchess de Beauvilliers, for indeed we are not in a situation to indulge in anything but what is absolutely necessary. I beg of you that the greatest possible expedition may be used in preparing what is ordered. The Queen is in her fifth month, and went the day before yesterday to the convent of the incarnation, to dine according to custom, as this is her Majesty's favourite convent. It would be desirable that the news you have from Piedmont of the great devotion of the Duke of Savoy, were quite certain. If God touched his heart, he would be more happy for it as well as others, to which purport I wrote to you some months back; but what followed, was not of a favourable nature, and I could wish this return to be more sincere.

You are too good to be so attentive to everything which concerns me, and to have wished to prejudice the Duke of Orleans in my favour.

This Prince has always shown me some distinguished mark of his esteem, and has often told me that he had inherited the friendly sentiments with which the late Monsieur had honoured me. Besides the respect and gratitude which I owe him, it is sufficient that the King sends him to serve their Majesties to fix my attention to everything which I think may afford him pleasure, and I flatter myself that he will speak to me very candidly respecting objects which concern the King and Queen.

It is fortunate that the enemy does not press us hard on the side of Flanders: and that they give time to M. de Vendome to amuse himself at Anet, and to receive a visit there from Monseigneur and the Princess de Conti. It is asserted that this general is not afraid of Marlborough, which he is in the right of, since he is only to be feared inasmuch as the honour is done him of believing that he knows more than another. We heard a few days ago that the English had been well beaten. A Spanish party of eighty troopers took and killed an English battalion of five hundred men without letting one escape; this redounds much to the honour of the King of Spain's cavalry, which cannot be too highly esteemed. Marshal de Berwick would not at all believe that five hundred regular well armed troops of the same nation as himself, could have suffered themselves to be beaten by eighty Castilians; however the latter have always had the advantage over their

enemy, when they have attacked them. I think we are now stronger than they, both in numbers and quality. The Marshal and the ambassador send all that is worth communicating to the King; it would be therefore useless to repeat what comes to my knowledge, for which reason I have nothing more to say to you except that I am afflicted at your sadness, the causes of which I conceive, although you do not explain them; we must, however, resign ourselves heartily to the dispensations of God, whether for good or for evil.

P.S. I was very much surprised to learn, by a letter I received last week from Cardinal de la Tremoille, that he had made no application whatever for an ambassador to Rome, and that he knows not through what motive such a report has been circulated, at which I am equally surprised with him. He lives in perfect amity with the Spanish ambassador and the cardinals, who are well disposed towards the two crowns, which I have always wished, knowing it to be for the good of the service. The Pope has granted to his Catholic Majesty two considerable favours, which is no trifling thing in the present conjuncture. I received the answer of Madame d'Angeau, but have had none from my old friend, Madam d'Heudicourt, to a letter which I took the liberty of sending you for her. Do not take this, if you please, for a complaint, as I have no pretensions to punctuality, and esteem myself too happy, provided all my sins against it are pardoned.

not astonished that the Duchess of Bur-
does not pique herself on exactness; her
other good and amiable qualities will atone
want of this.

LETTER LXXV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, April 10th, 1707.

I HAVE again no letters from you, Madam, by
st post; but without complaining, I am
d at it. Besides the pleasure and consolation
hese marks of the honour of your remem-
e bring me, I still desire them, because they
te my anxiety for your health, and I im-

Archduke is very weak, and that his army is in want of provisions: while Marshal de Berwick has the advantage over it in this respect, besides his army being superior in number and quality; it is therefore expected from his zeal and capacity that he will profit from so favourable a conjuncture, and not wait till the succours of England and Holland arrive against us, the moments being too valuable in the present situation of France and Spain. We know not precisely when the Duke of Orleans will arrive at Madrid. If he left Paris on the 4th Instant, as we were informed, we should naturally expect him in a week. The King and Queen thought of receiving this Prince at the Retiro, but the weather being yet cold, and this palace exposed to the violence of the winds, it is not judged proper for the queen's health to go there till it is warmer. Thus the Prince will be lodged in this palace, and treated like the infants, that is to say, a little different from the Princes of Asturias, who are the eldest, his Majesty thinking he could not do too much honour to the royal family. I shall have the satisfaction and honour of seeing him in my apartment, which I have not yet inhabited. I will accommodate him as well as I can, in order that he may find there at least cleanliness and convenience, which latter quality he will enjoy by being near that of the King and Queen, as he can ascend by a step quite alone, if he chooses to see their Majesties.

The Queen continues very well after her bleed-

ag. As it is extremely difficult to find good nurses in Spain, too much pains cannot be taken in seeking for them. I told you I had written to that effect to persons of authority in old Castile, upon the frontiers of Navarre, and in the provinces of Biscay, Alava, and Guipuscoa; but up to the present time, we have not succeeded in our wishes, and therefore a counsellor is going off to-morrow, chosen by the president of Castile, who well knows all those districts, and the Queen's surgeon accompanies him, in order that they may view together, in all the most retired places, the pregnant women, or those who have been lately confined; they are then to bring us of two different sorts, not knowing precisely how long the Queen has been in her present state, nor whether she may not be confined in her seventh month. The change of climate which these nurses will experience will almost inevitably affect their constitutions, and they must be fatigued by the length of the journey, besides the grief of quitting their husbands and families, and coming to a court, which cannot fail to startle them, from the difference which these sort of people enjoy in their cottages, to being with new faces and restrained habits. All these circumstances will make it necessary to bring up at least a dozen and I own that I shall not regret the expense which this will occasion: it being an object of the greatest importance that the precious infant which God is about to give us should have

never have thought it my d

plague myself so much about such things when I was enjoying a life of tranquillity at Rome, and I could easily have dispensed with this occupation, having already so many others; but if I did not exert myself on this occasion, to tell you the truth, I do not know how things would go on, for the Spaniards are naturally indolent, and very negligent even respecting their own concerns. We have two ladies of Spanish grandees, who are now in their ninth month, one of whom has not yet procured her nurse, and says that provided she is noble that is sufficient; it is true, the other has one, but she only nursed her sister, who is now in her nineteenth year: thus you may judge of the youth of the nurse and of the nutritious quality of her milk; however they think they are doing wonders. We see such extraordinary things in the manners and mode of thinking adopted by the greater part of this people, that you would also be astonished if you knew them.

I wait for the next courier with great impatience, in the hope of hearing from you. I can no longer exist without knowing that you are well, and that I still possess your friendship, which constitutes one of the greatest blessings of my life.

THE END.

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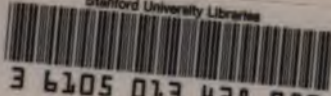


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